NEW TIMES

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A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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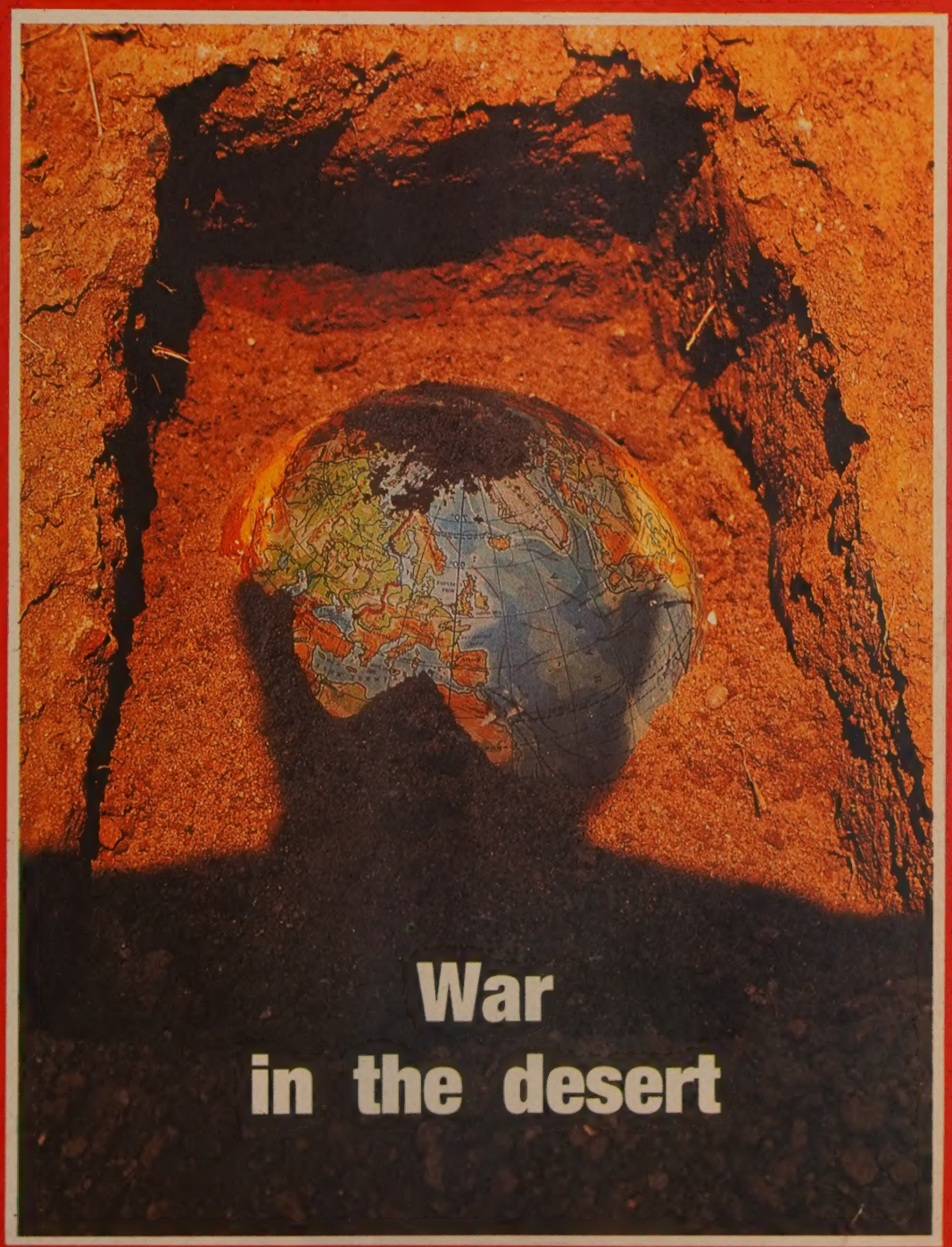

War in the desert

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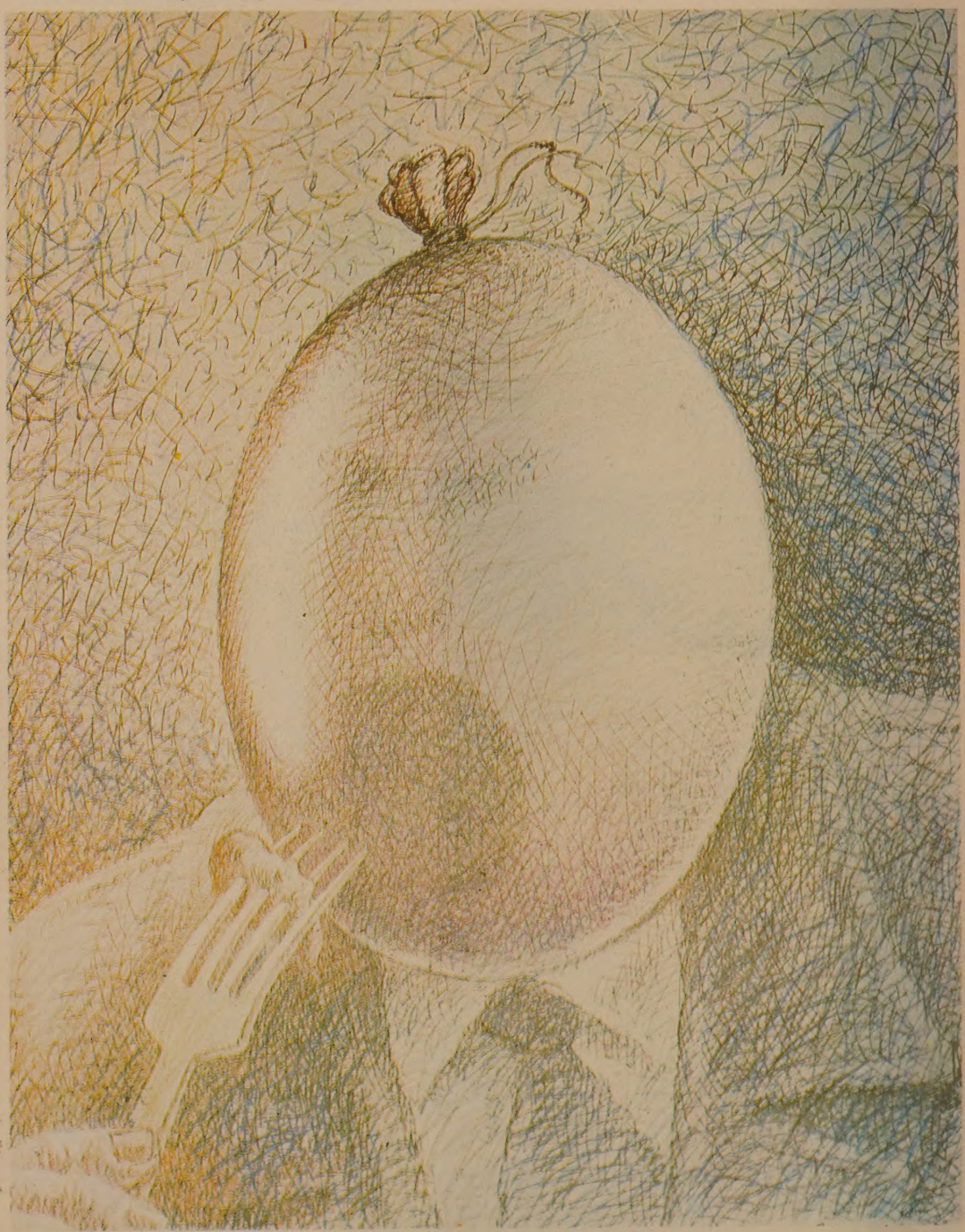

IGOR SMIRNOV

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

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Cover by Victor Brel

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From our mailbag

■ I am one of your new subscribers – attracted by a commercial I heard on Mayak radio. After that programme I read a few issues of *New Times* and realized that the journalists writing for your magazine are among this country's best. Brief but concise articles make one think and try to get rid of strict stereotypes. I especially liked the article by Alexander Roslyakov called "Old mines go off" (No.50/90) that made me write these words of gratitude. Up till now, as a reader I felt sympathy for *Novy Mir* and *Znamya*. Now I hope to become your permanent subscriber. The new appearance of *New Times* is not familiar yet to very many people. I think that your magazine is in line for very great success!

Vladislav Marandin,
metalworker
Moscow Region, USSR

■ Let me tell you quite frankly that in the last year or two your magazine has become counterrevolutionary. Each issue has on its cover a provocative drawing so that one doesn't even feel like opening it. For the sake of fairness, I must say that only Lev Bezymensky keeps up old traditions.

The articles by Tatiana Ivanova, including "Tin Gods", make me especially indignant. I used to work as chief of a district education department and can assure you that not a single pupil in any of the schools shot spit-wads at portraits of Stalin. His monument – without any humiliations – was taken away at night by workers of municipal services, and some veterans still keep portraits of Stalin. I have cultivated in my children a sense of respect for work, elders and their native land and they continue to serve it faithfully. My son is a colonel in the Soviet Army and a Candidate of Sciences (Technology).

New Times is also distributed abroad; is the honour of this country not dear to you? Nothing is sacred to you; you want only to destroy and slander the country.

N.Salo,
war and labour veteran,
the CPSU member from 1944,
Honoured Teacher of the RSFSR,
Orenburg Region, USSR

■ Issue No.40/90 featured an article on Moldova by Ksenia Myalo. The editorial board has made a blunder by giving the floor to only one side. The author sides with the Russian-speaking populace, abases the dignity of the Moldavian people and denies to the Moldavians the right to consider themselves the indigenous population of Moldova. But each country has its own indigenous people: in Russia – the Rus-

The party of a super-new type

■ There is representative democracy and direct democracy. Representative democracy is based on a democratic procedure that consists of the process of voting and counting. Hence a democratic society finds itself under the domination of people who have the right to put problems to the vote, i.e. professional politicians. But politicians are ordinary people who are trying to make a career. Therefore all of them, with the exception of a handful of incorrigible idealists, are drawn towards the class holding economic power. In the final analysis, representative democracy gives to the citizens only one right – to elect every few years representatives to bodies of power.

Once can see the sprouts of the direct democracy, for example, in Switzerland where a bill can be put on the referendum bypassing the parliament. But such referendums are no serious competitor to the representative democracy: even the swift development of means of communication cannot make up for their sluggishness. I want to propose a state system of a completely new type based on a power forming procedure that is different from democratic procedures. This procedure is based on a referendum. The power formed by the method of a referendum can be called Soviet power since a referendum represents a counsel of the people.

How could such a referendum be held? Each citizen has a certain number of special cards – in a sense they are his, or her ballot papers. All people have an equal and sufficiently large number of cards, such that everyone can take part in any public movement he or she is interested in. Each person who wants to participate directly in the running of the state has the right to issue and sell for these cards special bank notes – let us call them ideological shares. A person who wants to become a politician puts his or her shares on sales. People who share the views of the given politician buy his or her shares (and can any moment return them to him). In this way new politicians, new leaders accumulate political capital. Leaders with the largest amount of capital make up a council that has functions similar to that of a parliament. The richest politician becomes the chairman of the council. The most important difference between the parliament and the council is that the latter functions according to the principle: one card – one vote. Thus, during the vote the weight of council members is proportionate to their political capital. Such a referendum will turn the country's social life into a political market of sorts in which ideology is commodity.

This country has come to a historical impasse. The victory of socialism can be ensured by the creation of a popular front that will function on principles of a referendum. We can call this popular front the party of a super-new type.

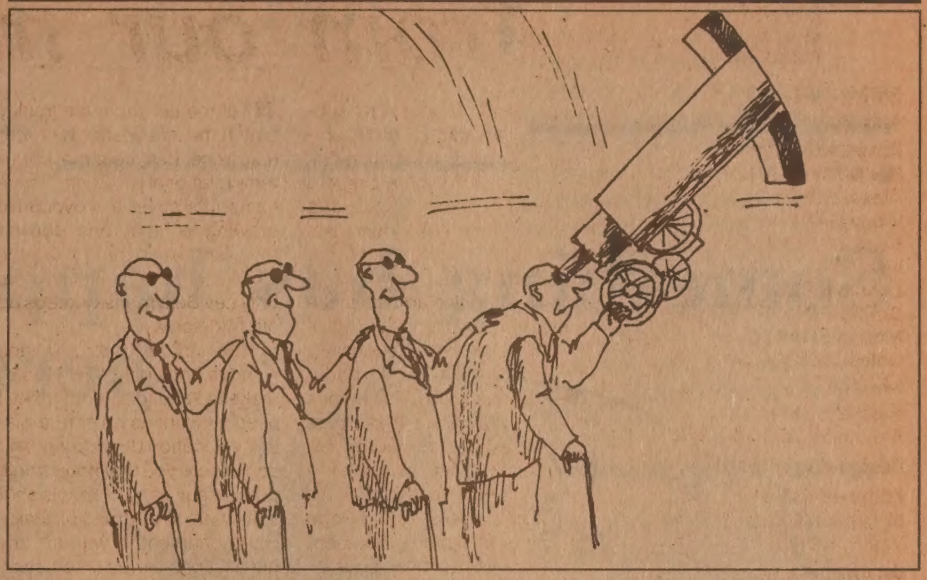
A.Averkin

Moscow, USSR

"Not a single pupil in any of the schools shot spit-wads at portraits of Stalin."

The Baltics: to occupy or not to occupy?

"The entire central press is against Moldavians."



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

sians, in Latvia – the Latvians, in France – the French. One can respect the rights of other nations, as they respect in Finland the rights of the Swedes, but not deny that there exists an indigenous population and that this is their historical native land. The author also claims that part of Moldova is not part of Moldavian lands. But in the Middle Ages they were inside the borders of Moldova, and other peoples came there later on.

The Moldavians are not alone to proclaim their "monosovereignty." In actuality, it exists in almost all states. Can one imagine that someone begins to call into question the statehood of the Russian, Italian, and French languages in the corresponding countries? What makes the Moldavians worse than other nations?

Is the Russian language banned in Moldova? Is it an insult to demand respect for the language of the country one lives in. The author is trying to make the Moldavians understand that the Cyrillic alphabet is not a noxious idea of Stalinists, but an ancient Moldavian written language. But the switch from the Latin alphabet to the Cyrillic alphabet was effected by Stalin in the 1940s not for the revival of ancient tradition, but for the humiliation of the Moldavians and the destruction of their ties with Romania. The author is exasperated by the slogan: "Our language is Romanian." From ancient times the residents of the Western lands of Moldova, Walachia and Transylvania were called the Romanian. After their reunification in the 19th century, the Romanian state was formed. Consequently, one can be Moldavian, Walachian, Transylvanian, and at the same time Romanian. Is all of Romania against our reunification? There is a whole movement in that country advocating the creation of a single state.

The entire central press is against the Moldavians who are deprived of the right to have their own say.

E. Sinitsin
Moscow, USSR

■ Today there are two points of view on the Baltics. Some people think that the events of the summer of 1940 are occupation, while others maintain that because of their strength and armament, the Red Army units brought at that time into the Baltic republics posed absolutely no danger to them. Is it impossible to find out how everything happened in reality – I have never come across any information about armed forces in the Baltics. I would like very much that historians at last look into what happened back then and tell us how strong the armies of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were in 1939–1940.

Viltutis
Moscow, USSR

***Compiled by* Tatiana Chernova**

I want to stand up for China

■ In the article by Leonid Vasilyev "The second revolution" (*NT* No.45/90) I read about China the following: "The complete deprivation of property carried out under the slogan of uprooting private property resulted of the end of 1950s in a terrible crisis and killer famine."

I was born among the Russian emigrants in the city of and up to 1954 lived in Manchuria. I have to take issue with the assertion by the Doctor of Sciences (History) and specialist on the history of the Orient because I cannot go along with his statement about the destruction of the free market immediately after 1949. There was galloping inflation, but the growth of prices was accompanied by a growth in salaries, and one saw no famine or economic crisis. Neither was there any devastation akin to that experienced by this country after the civil war. Means of transportation worked without any interruption, not to mention shops and stores. In the most difficult times the shelves in the stores were full of goods. Chinese knew no such notions as "shortage" or "queue." It was exactly on the basis of market private property relations that the mountains of fish, meat, vegetables and bananas were sold at that time. So, how can Leonid Vasilyev say that private property and the free market were done away with completely? The trade market appeared in China some three thousand years ago and no internal discord was an obstacle for it. In the first years after the Revolution, private property was not at all destroyed or expropriated, enterprises were redeemed from their owners and the former proprietors becoming lifelong directors receiving a part of the profits.

The chaos began in 1958 when Mao decided to astonish the world and to do better than the USSR in the construction of Communism. He stated: "Three years of privations, ten thousand years of prosperity." What has come out of it – everyone knows all too well. After the death of Great Helmsman, Mao, China began to return to a normal life. Their perestroika was carried out in less than two years. Once again family farms and private trade appeared. And what problem is there if the Chinese market does not like the European market? Why should it look like the European market? Europe for us is a model. As for the Chinese, they regard it will fully justified skepticism.

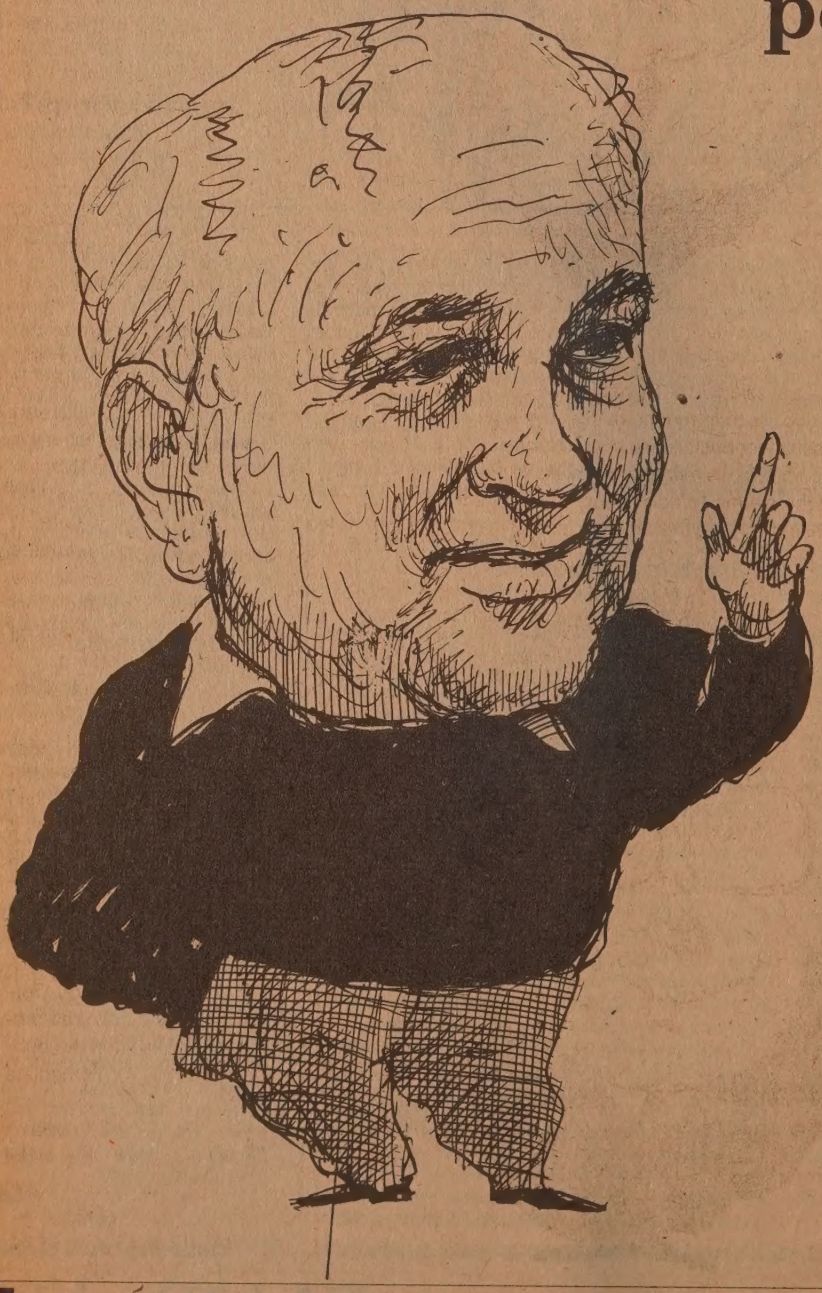
It is time we realize at last that Asia is not worse than Europe. It is time to stop to speak through clenched teeth – the Orient, the Asians. What do Europeans know about China? What do they know about that original and not at all backward world that knows no alcoholism or crimes against women, where educational institutions do not have problems with discipline and where work is regarded as a sacred process.

Then be more tactful. China is not Central Asia although, of course, there are absolutely no reasons to hold the latter in contempt. We should understand at last that the world is very diverse and varied, and that not everything existing outside our backyard is within our comprehension or that all that looks to us backward and barbarous is indeed so in reality.

K. Popova
Stavropol Territory, USSR

POLITICAL LIFE

Something has happened to perestroika



The confidence which Gorbachev enjoys among the people is still enough to get the country out of the crisis it is in.

Yeltsin's TV address remains puzzling. A subtle calculation or a nervous breakdown?

The new premier discovers old enemies: Western capital and the beginnings of free enterprise.

Drawing by Igor Shein

Six years ago, in March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected general secretary of the Communist Party. A month later he announced his programme of perestroika. The sixth anniversary of his appointment coincides with his 60th birthday. The sweeping reforms in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and drastic changes in world politics, associated with his name, are an occasion for celebrations. However, different political forces are now talking about the retreat and failure of perestroika and even its bankruptcy. The right-wing forces blame the President for launching perestroika while the left contend that he has not gone through with it.

TV "star"

Something is happening to perestroika. The Soviet Union has reached a new stage in its development, but no one knows what stage this is. It this the end to perestroika or the beginning of real perestroika, which calls for radical economic reforms?

In these circumstances, the stand taken by the head of state and especially his practical steps become truly epoch-making, to use Gorbachev's favourite term. The confidence which he, the architect of perestroika, enjoys among the people is still enough to help him get the nation out of the crisis it is in by using to his benefit the democratic forces of the society.

Recent events in the winter of this year, in both the economy and politics, have made the situation in the country worse. The atmosphere has become more alarming and tense, threatening a real storm. All our leading politicians have made their "contribution" to the deterioration of the internal situation.

The country is becoming unmanageable. Incapable of improving the lives of the people, the authorities at various levels and of different political leanings are engaged in neutralizing each other's actions. This can hardly last long.

In the run-up to the referendum on the Treaty of Union, 7 of the 15 republics simply refused to hold it and 6 are not taking part in the drafting of the Treaty of Union.

The economic plans of the Pavlov cabinet, set out by the Premier

at a session of the Soviet parliament, reveal a desire to introduce market relations and simultaneously leave everything as it was before. In his numerous interviews, Pavlov, who seems to have become a TV "star," has disclosed the aims and priorities of his

cabinet. They are stabilization, not perestroika, economic isolation instead of integration into the world economy, restoration instead of reforms, the new search for old enemies, namely, Western capital and the shoots of free enterprise in the country. The Premier tries to explain his failures by the conspiracy of hostile forces. He does not obviously like such words as competition, privatization and market and prefers to use such old notions as plan, state property and emphasis on the development of heavy industry.

Lastly, the conflict between the central government and the leadership of Russia has reached its critical point.

Misled by the ratings?

Yeltsin's TV address exploded our political life. It was followed by repercussions which may raise a storm of outcry. It seems that our officials are unable to learn even by their own mistakes. An almost month-long haggling between Yeltsin and the State Radio and Television Committee over the time and way of transmission, live or recorded, and in what channel whipped up interest in the TV address of the chairman of the Russian parliament announced well in advance and stirred up feelings in the country. Look, it was, the Radio and Television Committee does not allow Yeltsin to speak to the people. It is a striking example of the information blockade imposed by the central authorities on the Russian parliament.

In the evening of February 19 many Muscovites hurried to their TV sets. However, the long-awaited statement disappointed practically everyone. During his 42-minute talk, Yeltsin complained about how difficult it was to work because of stifling opposition on the part of the central government. In the last three minutes of his address, he read out a previously written statement in which he accused Gorbachev of tending towards dictatorship and deceiving the public and called for his immediate resignation.

Yeltsin's statement remains puzzling in many respects. What did it betray? Did his nerves give out? The TV address did not accord with the usual mode of action of the Russian leader.

One of the first, and widely spread, possible explanations was that Yeltsin wanted to improve his popularity rating which had markedly declined of late. Yeltsin feels in his element at times of crisis. Let's recall the last three years of his life. The harder the central government tried to humiliate him the more his popularity grew. So the TV address was a well-calculated step designed to "draw the opponents' fire," a step to be appreciated by the public in Russia.

Nevertheless, this explanation seems primitive. Moreover, by demanding Gorbachev's resignation now, Yeltsin cannot be sure that his call will be supported by the population of the Russian Federation. For many people, Gorbachev remains the symbol of perestroika. At a time when most of our citizens believe it is urgently necessary to remove the confrontation and personal (as many think) rivalry between the two leading politicians, a direct call for Gorbachev's resignation might not find a broad response in the country.

In all appearances, it was a well-thought-out, but desperate step. For instance, I heard of an idea of handing power over to the Council of Federation at a plenum of the Democratic Russia movement a month ago, shortly before events in Vilnius.

In a broader context, it looks as if he took the road which seems most productive to him, though it might prove to be very risky.

Crisis in the parliament

Yeltsin repeated during his address that he had made his choice. Indeed, this is amply demonstrated by his actions over the past year. The Yeltsin team sought to achieve in Russia what could not be done on a national scale because of resistance on the part of conservative forces in the central government. The parliament of the Russian Federation passed a law which provides for private ownership of land. At a press conference held after the adoption of this law, Boris Yeltsin was asked whether President Gorbachev offered him a post in the Union structure of power. Yeltsin replied in the negative and added that he would not accept any such post. "The post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Russia is so high that I simply do not imagine how higher one can rise," he said.

However, Yeltsin is hardly satisfied with the work of the Russian parliament over the past year. Though the Russian parliament went a step ahead of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in the solution of all problems, it was unable to carry out any substantial project. The central and Russian governments have different notions of what economic reform should be like. The ultimate rejection of the 500 days programme by the central government led to painful discord. The decisions taken by Ryzhkov (former premier) and now by Pavlov have taken the Russian government and parliament unaware. Russia does not have its own finances or unit of currency, and industrial enterprises on its territory are subordinate to Union ministries. Under the existing centralized system the Russian parliament and government are unable to do anything.

The rallies held in the capital's Manezhnaya Square one after another for three days in a row showed how high passions are running in the country

Yeltsin remains an opposition figure, though he occupies a simingly high post in the structures of power. Paradoxically enough, he did not have and does not have real power because the Russian parliament has gone on from a body with ornamental functions to become an interesting debating society, a site of political clashes, but not a genuine body of authority.

The past six years of perestroika have produced neither a radical political reform, which would redistribute powers and responsibility between the central government and republics, nor economic reform, which would exclude politics from the economy in general and shift the centre of economic life from bureaucratic departments to enterprises and companies. Democratic institutions have merely been proclaimed, but in fact they are not working or are quickly growing bureaucratic, which makes people disappointed with democrats and democracy.

In the last few months, one Yeltsin supporter after another has been removed from the Russian parliament and government. Grigory Yavlinsky and Gennady Filshin have resigned and Sergei Shakhrai has not been elected deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet for the second time.

Furthermore, the situation in the Russian parliament has acquired the character of a stabilized crisis. The Communists of Russia faction, united under the Russian Communist Party Central Committee, acts in an organized and aggressive manner. The present-day alignment of forces in the Russian parliament is such that any motion can be blocked. The democrats and the Communists have enough votes for this purpose. In the last few months, the deputies voted three or four times before they approved a statement on the political situation in the Russian Federation and a decision on Premier Silayev's report.

Russia has not been given the second national channel on television, though an appropriate agreement was reached at the second meeting between Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Radio Russia has been kicked out of the Mayak radio station.

It is possible that Yeltsin's challenge was a conscious step designated to aggravate the situation, an attempt to break the stalemate in the Russian Parliament. One thing cannot be denied. Yeltsin's statement provoked sharp division in the Russian Parliament. If Yeltsin wanted to do that, he achieved his end. And, most likely, he knew what he was doing.

Yeltsin "exposed"?

Yeltsin was accused of ambition, the fanning of personal confrontations with Gorbachev, the oblivion of national interests, and inapt behaviour. Strangely enough, in the competition of images, in the capricious play of ratings, the two leaders instantly exchanged roles. In the past, Yeltsin appeared in the eyes of people as a man persecuted and unjustly treated, and this gained him popularity. But Yeltsin's fierce and poorly justified attack on Gorbachev has increased public sympathy for the latter. True, the reaction of extremely obsequious advocates of Gorbachev in the party and government apparatus could lead to the opposite result. Having real grounds to criticize Yeltsin, they are doing it so clumsily that by their actions they are again arousing sympathy for him.

Yeltsin's statement was unanimously censured by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. He was also sharply criticized in the Russian Parliament. Six members of the presidium led by Yeltsin's deputy Svetlana Goryacheva (incidentally, she has not yet shown her worth in her post and it was her first public appearance) made public their political statement in which they expressed their disagreement with Yeltsin's policy.

It is surprising how quickly Goryacheva and her associates could write this statement, how quickly they were allowed to speak on television, and how willingly all national newspapers published this document. The Moscow city committee of the Communist Party interrupted its meeting to listen to the recording of Yeltsin's address and, using party language, gave a "principled assessment" of it.

It seems that Yeltsin's opponents can rub their hands with glee, for he was "exposed." Here is a man who does not want accord, who scrambles for power and breaks the country into pieces.

One European newspaper wrote that by his TV address, Yeltsin publicly shot himself in the foot and provoked a wave of resentment which will sweep Yeltsin and all democrats away. Well, let's excuse Europeans for not understanding our realities. There are tougher politicians in the Soviet Union – Landsbergis or Gamsakhurdia, for instance. The more rigid the attitude they take, the broader the support they enjoy among voters. If Yeltsin went the vole it means he counts on something.

The last chance

What is Yeltsin counting on? In order to risk, one should keenly feel public sentiments, for the direct support of the people, the mandate received from them, is Yeltsin's only chance, the only support that will provide a strong base for him and give him carte blanche. The reserves of cooperation between the feuding factions have been exhausted in the Russian Parliament. Incidentally, in the opinion of some deputies the Russian Parliament is deliberately made ineffective so that only one way out would remain, namely, the dissolution of the parliament and introduction of presidential rule.

The trip round Russia which Yeltsin took right after his TV statement, without giving any explanation and adding not a word to what he had said, has therefore not only a pragmatic but also a symbolic character. Yeltsin "went to the people." Incidentally, judging by some indications, the reaction of ordinary people to Yeltsin's statement differs from the "alignment" of opinions expressed in the parliaments. Unintelligible in form but radical in essence, this statement did not influence the sympathies of a considerable part of the population. This impression is buttressed by a recent opinion poll: only 20 percent of respondents favoured Yeltsin's resignation while 46 percent spoke against it.

More trump cards

It is interesting that Yeltsin is now in a situation in which Gorbachev found himself a year ago. Yeltsin will be able to carry out his plans and achieve his aims if he is elected president of the Russian Federation and if he assumes the presidency practically independent of the Supreme Soviet. On March 17, together with the referendum on a treaty of Union, voters will be asked to express their opinion on the expediency of introducing the presidency. In this context Yeltsin becomes especially dangerous for the central authorities.

IS GOING ON
WHAT
WILL BE

No wonder that the Communist members of the Russian Parliament insistently called for convening a special congress of people's deputies on March 4 or 5 (not later), that is, before the referendum. If Yeltsin could be removed from his post at this congress, the March 17 referendum would not be so dangerous and the referendum on the treaty of Union would be held calmly.

Judging from reports, during his tour of Russia, Yeltsin keeps repeating that Russia is still plundered and that only its independence of the central government can improve the situation in the republic. Incidentally, his revelation about the selling of 200 tons of Russian gold abroad produces a strong impression on audiences. The point is that Russia never received any profit from this operation.

The main flaws in Yeltsin's current policy are his strained relations with the army (his statement about the possibility of raising a Russian Army is of course a blunder unpardonable for a politician) and his relations with the Russian-language minority population in constituent republics after his statement in support of the Baltic governments.

However, he can find trump-cards here, too. Yeltsin can fully regain his political capital by playing on the theme of Russian patriotism. If during his tour of Russia Yeltsin meets, as expected, with Georgian president Gamsakhurdia and helps solve the South Ossetian problem, his rating will jump again.

* * *

If an adequate number of people in Russia go to the polls on March 17, they will most likely vote for the presidency. Boris Yeltsin has a real chance to be elected president of the Russian Federation. In this case he will be able not only to pursue his policy (as Gorbachev does in the form of decrees) but will also become safe from attempts to remove him from the political scene. Then he would have played his cards right. But if events go in a different way and he is removed from the post of chairman of the Russian Parliament, the Communists of Russia faction can hardly be glad, too. In the opposition Boris Yeltsin will be even more dangerous for them.

Marina Shakina

100 days at the post of foreign minister

Russia had its foreign ministry before, but it did not have its own foreign policy. Has anything changed lately?

Our staff writer **Vladimir Razuvayev** talks with **ANDREI KOZYREV,** Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

New Times. In your first interviews as foreign minister of the Russian Federation, you said that the foreign policy support of the 500 days programme would be the main goal of your activity in the foreseeable future. The programme was not accepted. The discussion and approval of Russia's foreign policy concept by its parliament, which was scheduled for January, was postponed. How do you feel in the role of foreign minsiter without the necessary guidelines?

Andrei Kozyrev. I feel exactly like other members of the Russian government. Foreign-policy sovereignty derives from internal political sovereignty and, as is known, the latter does not yet exist.

NT. Over 100 days have passed since you were appointed foreign minister. In politics this period seems enough for summing up initial results.

A.K. I would say that we – I have in mind the Russian government as a whole – and the central government have learned to obstruct each other's actions effectively. Our task now is to learn how to do our business effectively. My first impressions as a member of the Russian government give me enough grounds to say that the central government's attempt to take no notice of the republics is as disastrous as the attempts of some republics to pretend that the central government does not exist.

NT. You speak about your impressions as a member of the government of the Russian Federation. What would you say as foreign minister of the federation?

A.K. Only separate parts have remained of the 500 days programme and, nevertheless, the government is trying to put them into action. The foreign ministry of the republic sees its task as providing favourable external conditions for this policy. However, the unexpected measures of the central government often frustrate our efforts. For instance, Russia's premier Silayev and I recently paid an official visit to West Germany. The purpose of our trip was to create a favourable atmosphere for business ties between German companies and our republic. It seems we have achieved some results. However, premier Pavlov's statement about the "conspiracy of bankers" appears to have thwarted the agreements we have reached there.

Even the most fervent cold warriors could not spoil our relations with Germany more than Pavlov did. In fact, he endangered the possibility of nurturing trust in the Soviet Union in the economic sphere. As far as I know, his statement caused alienation in the United States. The point is not only that Western bankers were prepared to support perestroika and President Gorbachev. The danger lies in a revival of primitive thinking, the "besieged fortress" psychology. Judging by his words, Pavlov regards the rest of the world as permanently alien to our country. When this psychology is backed up by expropriation measures of the government – I have in mind the exchange of banknotes – the attitude of bankers to the Soviet Union becomes entirely negative. The West is concerned first of all about the state's respect for the right of ownership and the right of the owner. It will do business with a state which does respect this right.

NT. At one time Soviet experts regarded the "war of laws" as a principal obstacle to attracting western capital.

A.K. I hate this notion. In other countries you will also find a lack of harmony between laws. However, public tensions are not stirred up over this problem. They talk simply about the "harmonizing of laws". For instance, in the US and Germany, states and lands have their own laws which often differ from federal ones. However, no one makes this a special problem. Incidentally, the purpose is absolutely clear: not to scare foreign businessmen away.

I tried to explain to western businessmen that there is no "war of laws" in the Soviet Union, that it is simply a historically natural process of finding new rules of the game. True, this absolutely logical phenomenon is likely to turn into an internal "cold war" only because some people regard Yeltsyn as a rival in the struggle for power.

There is growing conviction in the West now that the central government bodies of the USSR are returning to an anti-market, anti-business and anti-western consciousness. There is no way of telling our partners that this obstacle is a product of growth and can be harmonized. So in the near future we can expect a turn towards the quickly forgotten times of isolation and technological boycott of our country.

NT. It is possible, as far as I know, that the government of which you are a member could soon have problems in the parliament and that you personally will become the target of criticism. Why could you be criticized, in your opinion?

A.K. It is quite possible indeed that I may become the target of attacks on the part of some legislators. In the parliament, as in society upon the whole, attempts are being made to find "enemies." What are the grounds for criticism? There is no denying the fact that I have made more than few mistakes. We have had a hard time in the last

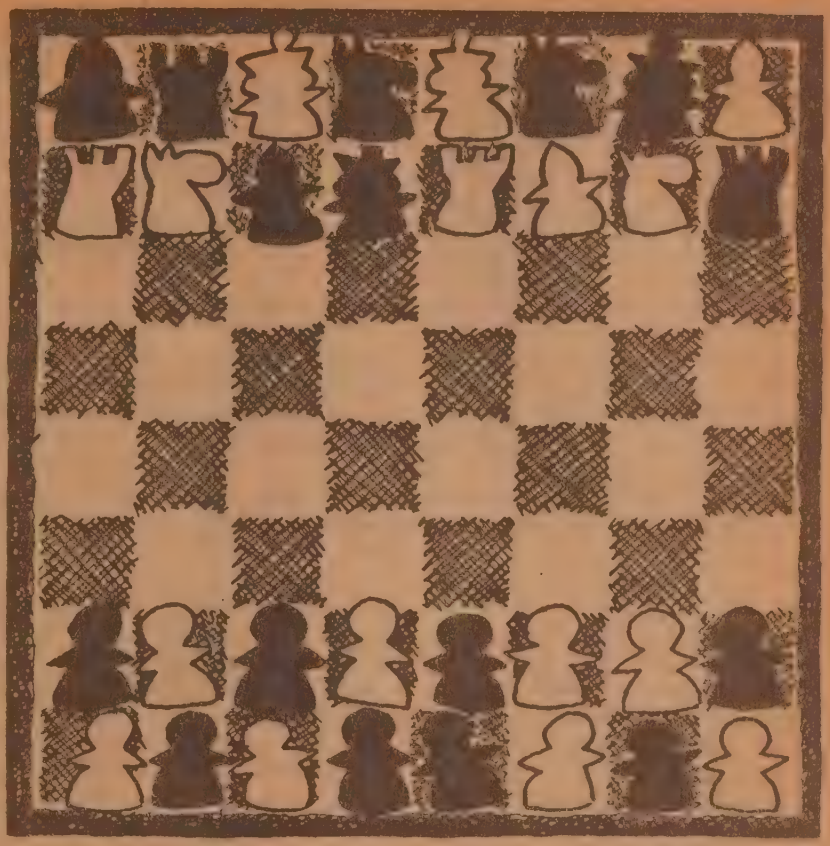
few months. He who never climbs never falls. I think that conservatives can assail the foreign ministry mainly for its participation in the drawing up of treaties between the republics and the establishment of relations between them. Some critics regard this activity as proof of the Russian Federation leaders' wish to break up the Union by taking inter-republican relations to the international level. The reluctance of some people to accept this aspect of our foreign ministry's activity can be explained by their unwillingness to see present-day realities. For 70 years our country suffered from an ideologized approach to foreign policy, and attempts are now being made to apply it to inter-republican relations.

The foreign ministry of the Russian Federation is not holding negotiations with the respective ministries of other Union republics on the conclusion of treaties. This is being done by groups of deputies. Our ministry is only taking part in the drafting of treaties by introducing standards of international law into them. This participation is quite justified, because the existing standards of international law draw on the experience of finding solutions to many problems now confronting our country. I have in mind social, humanitarian, economic, ethnic and inter-republican problems.

During my career I often took part in the settling of conflicts. It would simply be unwise of me not to use my knowledge and experience in this sphere. Many tested methods of resolving conflicts were effectively applied to other countries. They are already yielding results and will yield results in the Soviet Union.

Another aspect of the problem is that I simply do not want to recognize the "false alternative," namely, totalitarian unitarianism. This system treats unfairly not only Baltic or Central Asian republics but also the Russian Federation. Let us say frankly that the Soviet Union created a threat in the world scene largely because of its totalitarian character. The possibility of an explosion of hostility between republics should also be attributed to the "false alternative", in my opinion. It may appear that the republics can have no other future but new Berlin Walls between them and endless territorial redivisions accompanied by armed clashes and wars.

NT. I understand that in your activity you want to oppose the "false alternative" with something else.



Drawing by Victor Kazachek

A.K. There is also a "civilized alternative." This is what our ministry has been concerned with in the last few months. Frankly speaking, I feel proud that I took part in this work. We are studying integration tendencies in other countries and the model of West European integration. Of course, the situation in Western Europe is different from that in the Soviet Union. I am sure, however, that the main principles of its integrational model can be used in our conditions.

The opponents of this approach usually note that the borders of republics do not exactly reflect the ethnic composition of their population. This is so indeed. But does this mean that republics have to be engaged to endless territorial disputes? Germany and France fought for Alsace-Lorraine for centuries until they accepted the principle of a civilized settlement of the ancient dispute. They simply made the border between them purely symbolic. We have to reach a similar settlement. In my post as foreign minister I try to help the progress of integration between republics, the establishment of a renovated Union as a community of sovereign states.

An event which took place in Tallinn recently can be described, in my opinion, as a historic shift in relations between Russian and the Baltic republics. Under an agreement between the Russian Federation and Estonia, we held an international meeting of experts on human rights. Experts from eight European countries studied Estonian legislation and the way it is applied, and met with representatives of all political trends and ethnic groups. It turned out that friction between various national and ethnic groups does exist in that Baltic republic, but mainly in everyday life. Estonian legislation is far from perfect. However, on the whole it remains on the average European level. Possibilities for improving Estonia's legal standards were laid down. In my opinion, this is what we call a civilized method of resolving conflicts. We have satisfied ourselves that it can be applied even in the most difficult conditions, even when blood has just been shed in the neighbouring republics.

NT. For some time now the question of shifting an emphasis in American policy towards the USSR has been debated in the United States. It is proposed that the United States should develop contacts with the Soviet Union's republics and local democratic governments. It is not a matter of counting on the forces opposed to the Kremlin but rather of developing parallel relations with the central, republican and local authorities.

A.K. I think that the right direction has been chosen for such a shift. In the Soviet Union and abroad I constantly advocate a similar "constructive parallelism." Of course, we should not propose a choice which would be dangerous and complicated for our foreign partners, namely, either the Union or the republics. In my opinion, relations with the Union and republics should be developed simultaneously. The Russian Federation is interested in seeing the shoots of new relations between the USSR and the West grow stronger.

NT. You have just visited the United States, for the first time in the rank of minister. Did you notice anything that would allow us to hope for progress in what you call "constructive parallelism"?

A.K. The Russian delegation was given much attention. I was pleased with the American understanding of the new role of republics in the USSR and their foreign policy. But, frankly speaking, the enhanced attention of Americans did not only please me. Besides the sympathy and interest in the Russian Federation's policy we noticed their disappointment in the prospects of relations with the Kremlin. Americans fear that the Soviet leadership began to abandon the principles which raised Soviet-American relations to their present level. This worried me, of course, because there is no way of creating a favourable climate for foreign investment in a separate republic. Our efforts can only develop what has been achieved by the policy of the Union government. That is why we do not want the central government to slide into old positions. Moreover, I would support its movement forward, to a policy of common sense.

But, on the whole, I found in the United States quite good prospects for the development of "constructive parallelism" or "two-way traffic," as other call this policy. I would like to note specially interesting possibilities for cooperation between different regions of Russia and American states. Incidentally, cooperation along similar lines could also be conducted with other countries, Germany for instance. The thesis – the "Europe of states" should develop along with the "Europe of regions" – is becoming increasingly popular. Moreover, in the latter case cooperation can prove and does prove much more productive than in the case of interstate relations.

The independence of regions in the Soviet Union is at a terribly low level, however. It is ridiculous that German lands have considerably more rights in managing their affairs than the leadership of the Russian Federation. For instance, we did not even have our own currency fund. When Russian delegations go abroad they obtain foreign currency in various devious ways. At the same time, any West European region enjoys greater independence in its expenditure. I shall refrain from describing our present situation in harsher terms.

NT. It is humiliating to ask for foreign currency, isn't it?

A.K. It is humiliating indeed. However, speaking broadly, we should not reduce the talk only to this aspect of the problem. We should defend our dignity by other means, first of all by a civilized policy. For 70 years Soviet diplomats paid their expenses and visited conferences but failed to win respect. I remember how, right after Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, crowds of people chanted the word "Killers" in front of Soviet missions abroad.

Incidentally, my recent trip to the United States unexpectedly reminded me of past events. Too many questions were asked about the bloodshed in Lithuania and Latvia. True, this time I could reply sincerely that Yeltsin and other leaders of the Russian Federation favour negotiations, not the use of tanks in the Baltic republics. I thank that precisely such a policy means upholding the dignity of the state.

NT. The conflict between Russia and the central government is now the talk of the nation. Could you say how you cooperate with the foreign ministry of the USSR?

A.K. From the very outset I have favoured cooperation between the two ministries. Shevardnadze once advanced the formula of "model relations" with republican ministries. True, this did not always work out in practice. The new minister has reaffirmed the course for "model relations." It should be noted that in principle all problems can be solved. The Russian and Union foreign ministries agree that the difference of positions and their coordination are quite natural.

The point is that the legacy of totalitarian thinking has led to a wrong understanding of the very notion of "coordination." In our country it is understood as levelling and, when the matter concerns relations between republics, as unitarianism. In my opinion, the principle of coordination does not rule out independent actions by republics and nuances in their approaches. Otherwise, strange things can happen. For instance, the foreign minister of Russia goes to Washington, where he meets with Secretary of State Baker. He naturally reports to Moscow or his impressions of the talks. One can argue about the merits of this information, but I understand that it should go not only to the foreign ministry of the USSR, but also and first of all to the leadership of the Russian Federation. It turned out in fact that the information was received by the Union leadership and did not reach Yeltsin.

NT. Last autumn a young brilliant diplomat who headed a department in the Union foreign ministry decided to change his rather quiet post, extremely attractive in the opinion of many people, for the post of foreign minister of the Russian Federation, rather dangerous from the standpoint of one's future career (let us say frankly). Have you ever regretted in the past months that you made this choice?

A.K. From the very outset I have had no doubts about the correctness of my decision. Of course, the previous post had its tangible merits. But then I imagine how unhappy I would feel if I did not agree to work in the Russian foreign ministry, if I missed the chance to use my professional experience to help Russia live in keeping with civilized standards. The problem does not lie in the advantages of one post or another. The difference is that in my present post I feel less remorse than I did before.

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A long dinner at the Press House

New Times special correspondents report from Riga, Latvia

We were often told in Riga that Moscow had planned to conduct the first strike against the Baltic democracies there, not in Vilnius. The scenario had been worked out and lay in wait. However, Lithuanian communists were quicker than their Latvian counterparts. The putsch in Vilnius failed, and the January 20 attack of the USSR Interior Ministry's riot police force at the Latvian Interior Ministry was only a spontaneous act of violence committed by "defenders of socialism" who went berserk...

After the events of January 13, the leadership of the 170 thousand-strong Popular Front, having a majority in parliament, split-up into radical factions and the advocates of compromise with the Kremlin.

The Supreme Soviet of Latvia wants a consensus in relations with Moscow (it has been a month since all factions other than that of the Popular Front walked out of the republican parliament). Latvian representatives take part in the sittings of the Council of the Federation and the all-union meetings of foreign ministers. Until very recently, the Latvian authorities tried hard to stress their loyalty to Moscow and their adherence to the principle of a gradual transition to independence. Today it looks like this principle is being revised. On February 12, after heated debate, the parliament of Latvia took the decision to hold in all-Latvian referendum on March 3 this year, asking the people living in the republic to vote for or against "a democratic and fully independent Latvia." Thus Riga became the last Baltic capital to schedule a referendum of its own as a counterweight to the all-union referendum due on March 17. The special decree on the referendum stipulates that only those with Latvian domicile registration stamps may come to the polls. Thus, Soviet Army servicemen and their families, even those among them who lived in Latvia for a substantial period of time, were automatically excluded from the referendum and will have to vote on March 17. The Popular Front is divided over the all-union referendum: some PF leaders advocate participation in both referendums while others insist that the all-union one be ignored.

"Holding the Kremlin referendum is impossible in Latvia because it will internationalize the current crisis," says Romualdas Razukas, the radical PF Chairman. "We proceed from the fact that the independent Latvian Republic was restored in May 1990."

"Sociologists have calculated," he went on to say, "that 91 percent of Letts and 36 percent of Russians support the Popular Front. However, the number of supporters in the non-Latvian segment of the population could have been greater. We underestimated the Russian-speaking people's pro-democracy sentiments. After the bloody events of January 13, the Popular Front is going to broaden ther dialogue with all pro-democracy forces of the republic, minus the Riga branch of the CPSU, of course.

Is the Lithuanian option acceptable to Latvia?

Or will the Latvian government stick to its "gradual transition" principle?

"Our opponents who accuse the Popular Front of being nationalistic fail to take into account that we are only starting to learn democracy," said the Popular Front Chairman. "That is why we are prepared to submit all the laws adopted by the Latvian parliament to international examination. Even without foreign advice, we agree that there have been serious mistakes in our activities. Mistakes may be different however. We have always been ready to solve problems by parliamentary ways, not by the use of armed force. There is only one point on which we shall not compromise: non-parliamentary activities, calls for overthrow of the legitimate authorities must be punished as crimes against the state.

"The Soviet Army is defending the interests of the CPSU here in Latvia," Razukas told us. "Nonetheless, the parliament should not have rushed to take the November 14, 1990 decision to cut off Soviet Army garrisons' supplies. By taking this decision, we set all the Soviet Army troops deployed in Latvia against the parliament. At the same time, there are many servicemen who are democratically minded and do not want to police Latvia. After the bloodshed in Vilnius, 14 servicemen wrote to the Popular Front of Latvia expressing their support for the Latvian Republic. The number is not large, to be sure, but it is a sign that some serious reevaluations are under way in the minds of the military, although most Soviet servicemen are still infected with the Alksnis syndrome (from the name of Col. Alksnis, People's Deputy of the USSR and a vocal opponent of Baltic independence. – **Ed.).** The main task today as we see it, is to prevent new bloodshed and civil war..."

Apparently, PF leaders like to play cat-and-mouse with the Kremlin, advocating the gradual transition principle so as not to irritate Moscow and allow Riga to pass its own laws at the same time. The lessons of Lithuania, however, seem to have pushed Riga to the conclusion that intolerance a là Landsbergis could bring more political dividends.

The decision of the parliament of Iceland to establish diplomatic relations with the Lithuanian Republic has impressed Latvian law-makers. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Latvia said that during the transition period, the republic might accept the European Parliament's offer of "a special status with certain privileges." Gorbunovs believes this status could be the West's very first step towards recognizing Latvian independence.

The Communists still enjoy strong influence in Latvia, which is the most industrialized of the Baltic republics. After the Vilnius massacre, though, many PC members, especially intellectuals, started turning in their party cards. In conditions in which the Latvian Communist Party (LCP) had nothing to lose but its property guarded by the "black berets" of the USSR Interior Ministry's riot police force, the radicals took over in the LCP leadership. Their leader, Alfreds Rubiks, 55, thus said about himself: "I am neither a Russian, nor a Lett. I

am a Soviet." It is believed in Riga that the LCP boss had hoped that direct presidential rule might be introduced in Latvia and he would be appointed the Kremlin's governor of Latvia. Presidential rule has never introduced though, and rumours are rife in Riga that Rubiks may soon fade from the political arena.

Communists and the Interfront, which is closely associated with them, are cashing in on the economic difficulties the republic is currently going through. Today Latvia has the highest prices in all the Baltic republics. At the same time, leaders of the LCP and the Interfront ignore the obvious fact that the economic crisis has enveloped the entire country and even in the regions where communsits remain in power, prices are sky-rocketing.

The Hammer and Sickle proudly flies over the Interfront's HQ on Riga's Smilsu Street.

Arkady Vrublevsky, director of the LCP Publishing House: "The soldiers have just dropped in the Press House to have dinner..."
Photo by Leonid Besarab

As we talked with Anatoly Alexeyev, the leader of Interfront, a member broke in and yelled when he saw us sitting there: "Moscow guests! Now, guys, who are you? Are you on our side or perhaps, on democrats'?" Seeing the stunned expression in our faces the man went on: "C'mon, tell me now: are you Nevzorovites or not?" (Nevzorov is a Leningrad-based TV reporter notorious for his chauvinistic and biased reporting from the Baltics – **Ed.**).

Interfront insists it expresses the interests of all Russian-speaking inhabitants of Latvia. Is this really so? As long as Interfront opposed local nationalists and advocated democracy and legality, it was indeed supported by a vast segment of the Russian-speaking population. Interfront policies started losing popularity after it began opposing Latvian independence. Many Russians told us in Riga they believed the Interfront had turned into "a committee for defence of the LCP."

The mechanism of setting up All-Latvian Public Salvation Committee (PSC) is kept secret, but as Alfreds Slicers, the LCP boss at the Limbazu district blurted out, all LCP leaders from the district level upwards were automatically included in such committees. Local journalists also told us that Interfront leaders were among PSC members as well.

"No matter whether I like the Latvian Republic or not," said Anita Stankevica, chairwoman of the League of Latvian Women, "it is a great error to oppose the people as the Interfront does. Suppose presidential rule is introduced in Riga and the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is restored. Will peace and accord return? Never. If this happens, all non-Letts will have no alternative, but to flee. But no one wants us anywhere..."

At the beginning of February, the prodemocratic Russian-speaking forces of Latvia united and issued a resolution, which said, in particular: "We are opposed to the wide-spread myth that Latvia's Russian-speaking population is subject to discrimination." Russian-speaking democrats declared their preparedness "to defend democracy and independence together with all the peoples of Latvia."

Interfront's stance is different, however:

"My ancestors settled in Latvia over two centuries ago," said Alexeyev. "I was born in Riga under the bourgeois Ulmanis regime. Latvian is my native language. Many of my closest relations are Letts. It could seem that I had no reason whatsoever to start fighting the nationalists. But I could not remain aloof when we were called 'occupiers'.

"Are we occupiers?" he went on to say. "Russia has had historical rights on these lands ever since the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Our ancestors had been building a great power for centuries. Will we allow it to be destroyed? What is Latvian independence? The 20 years of Latvia's independent bourgeois republic is but a brief moment in history. Now nationalists are active again, although they have nothing to complain of: Letts make up 80 percent of the republican parliament and two thirds of the cabinets...

"The Popular Front wanted to turn us into second-rate citizens, into hired labourers with no right to vote or to be elected. Russians are being fired from their jobs and the parliament is fomenting anti-Russian sentiments. The Popular Front is in no hurry to distance itself from fascist slogans like "Latvia for the Letts!" and the Russian language is subject to discrimination, although in Finland, where ethnic Swedes make up only six percent of the population the Swedish language is the second official language... We believe that the current bourgeois government is acting in the interests of 7 percent of the population: those who had found cushy jobs in the PF leadership and the local mafiosi whom the PF protects," concluded the Interfront leader.

"Is there a way out of this crisis?"

"There can be no peaceful solution to the crisis in Latvia," Alexeyev is convinced. "We are on the threshold of a civil war. The separatists have already formed units. We have no choice but to accept this challenge. The day will come when we have to take up arms to defend our hearth."

The Interfront has a powerful ally: the Interior Minsitry's riot police force. We confronted some "black berets" in the Press House which they have been defending since January 2. When asked by journalists what they were doing at the Press House, Arkady Vrublevsky, director of the Publishing House of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee, retorted: "Don't ask silly questions. They've just dropped in to have a dinner..." The "black berets" have been dining for months already. Communist Vrublevsky told journalists later: "We are here to stay. The parliament of Latvia? It will not last long..." A riot police force representative added: "The Godmanis government is nothing for us... We shall destroy the current regime... We shall take over strategic installations and arrange for a trial of the nationalists... Others will calm down by themselves."

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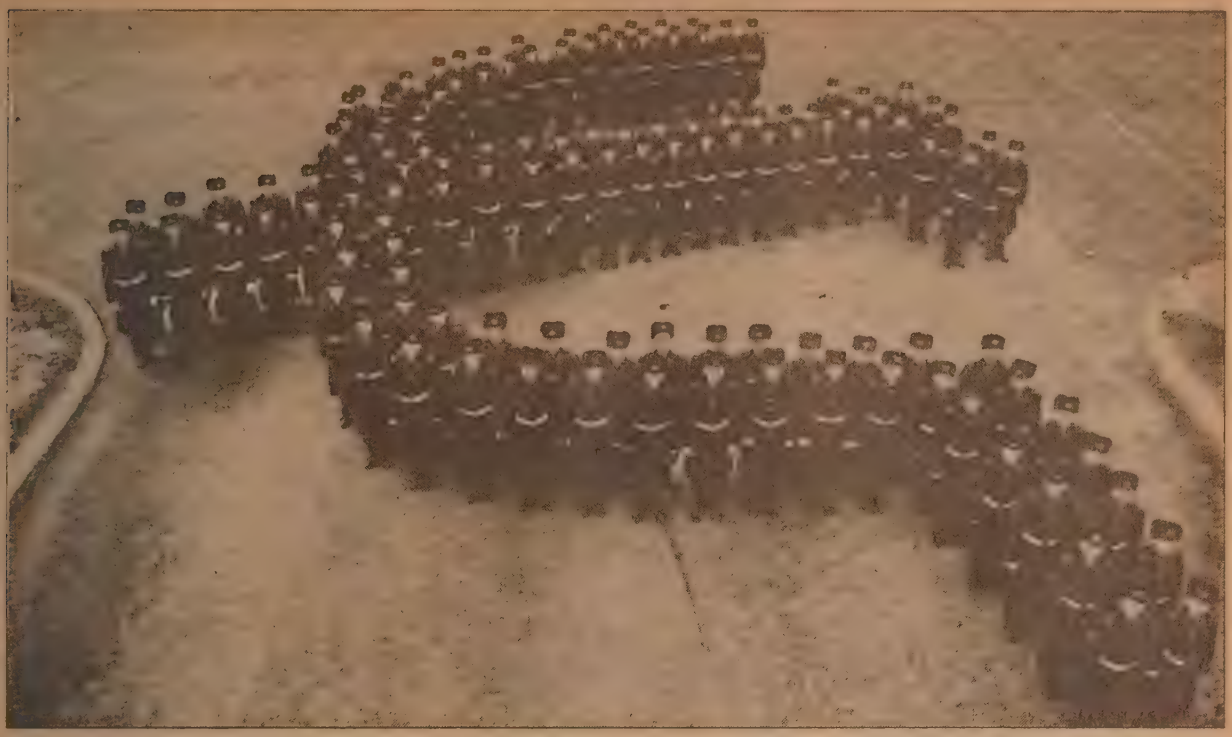
Latvian politicians are busy calculating who has gained from the bloodshed in Vilnius and Riga. Who has gained is in actuality obvious: "radicals" on both sides...

Yakov Borovoi and Alexander Chudodeyev



The whims of the "command-decorative" system

Poel Karp

For 73 years our state has been a single corporation which issues decrees, executes them, decides whether to punish or not, indicates what is to be produced and in what quantities. The country is falling to pieces not from a lack of power, but from the excess of it...

A Leningrad newspaper assured readers recently that Kerensky should have allowed Kornilov to enter Petrograd. Had he done so, the paper asserts, the general's strong power would quickly have been transformed into quite a respectable constitutional monarchy. Today most people standing in queues demand that order be established and even comment on who must be shot, who should be deported or deprived of food ration coupons.

It is as though people have forgotten that a veritable order was set only when social contradictions became legal and no longer excited the people. Gorbachev's forerunners managed to disregard such contradictions because of our enormous natural and manpower resources. It seemed that one might stop counting the number of people killed and the amount of oil sold. After the squandering policies of Stalin and Brezhnev, natural resources no longer lie on the surface while the need for them grows ever more. Struggle for military superiority over the rest of the world for the sake of security has become most crippling to ourselves.

Crushed hopes

Having gained five years ago unlimited power as CPSU Central Committee General Secretary, Gorbachev realized that boundless power in the face of major tasks now weighing on the country is no longer effective and it is necessary to act differently. Then why did the situation, far from improving, become even worse? Why did the official condemnation of the sending of tanks into Budapest and Prague did not prevent them from being used in Vilnius? In Budapest they crushed hopes raised by the 20th CPSU Congress, in Prague – the hopes connected with Kosygin's reform. No need to enumerate what was crushed on the streets of Vilnius. The feelings evoked by the events there are clear and many people are full of them. But our society is still reluctant to see the cast-iron links

between hopes for a revolution from above and the advance of tanks. They are trying to find out who ordered the army to shoot but not the reason why the government itself is stopping them, sensing ever more keenly the need for changes and even starting them boldly.

They say the breaking of the command and administer system began without creating a new one, capable of replacing it. The former head of the government even explained this in theoretical terms: "The priority of ideology over the economy is no mere trifle and no mere detail; nor is it voluntarism or the stupidity of certain leaders – it is the essence of the model we lived with, its mainstays." Voluntarism is recalled in vain because the primacy of ideology over reality is precisely consistent voluntarism; but otherwise each word is true. However, Marx was also correct in maintaining that public consciousness is determined not by ideology decreed from above, but by the life of society, that the best ideology won't provide people with food, clothing and shelter, but without it people stop recognizing its sacred character and, what is the main thing, the sacred nature of the standards it assigns to the national economy. Now people no longer trust the government, when following its ideology (naturally having adopted from Marx some principles but moved from it farther than Christianity from Plato), the goverment issued an amount of money much more than the quantity of goods, resulting in empty shop counters. But today the blame is placed not on ideology, not on people who ordered money printed but on certain "destructive forces" – formerly called "wreckers," "enemies of the people."

The power of a single corporation

Having united the country's entire economy and entrusting the state with control over it, the voluntarist ideology tries to suggest that this places power not only above all sorts of constitutions, but also above the objective laws of economics and nature. After the Great Change of 1929, our state turned into a single corporation whose administration promulgates laws, executes them, decides whether to punish or not and stipulates for itself the amount of bolts and nuts to be produced. Everything is under its control. The monopolistic character of this corporation, which cannot, naturally, have internal objective regulators, has deprived enterprises and people – except for die-hard idealists – of elementary incentives to labour, to improve the quality of its labour and raise productivity. When the price of goods is fixed not on the basis of objective values which cannot be revealed without the existence of a market, but by the considerations of various chiefs, there is no point in working honestly and artificial labour incentives become necessary.

The party became the stimulator of such incentives, again the only party that deals with economic affairs. It appointed to various posts its own members who rarely risked disobeying even ruinous orders, because if a person was expelled from the party, it made him more deprived of any rights than non-Party members. An incentive for labour was also the threat of being sent to the GULAG where the productions particularly ruthless "threats" to "free" labour were concentrated. Both levers functioned, but only to a certain degree – while workers were in plenty and the equipment was comparatively simple and it seemed that there were no irreplaceable people. But in the camps where brainwork was needed, the regime had to be relaxed, therefore, this kind of camp was called "the first circle." The increasing inconsistency of such a system with a need for renovation, stipulated by technical as well as human aspects of the scientific and technological revolution (our ideology denied it for a long time), without which the country would cease to be not only a great but also an independent power, would push more strongly than before to reforms turned down more than once.

Let us feed ourselves

The actual dispute in Lithuania is not between Lithuanians and Russians, but between the local authorities and exterritorial production, and this happens everywhere in the country. The economy is controlled by All-Union ministries under whose patronage it does not make an attempt to protect ecological standards, not to mention taxes paid to the local budget. After the Great Change the Soviets were deprived of power and only formally approved party instructions. They have no power control-levers, and they are adapted only to approving what has been sent out from above. No matter how many well-deserving people are elected to the Soviets, without gaining from the Centre at least some real authority, the republics will remain decorative, even if they attain the artistic standards of the sets by such artists as Korovin or Golovin. Our system is called command-and-administrative, but I think it would be more correct to call it "command-decorative." Until the enterprises remain under state control, the Soviets can have no real power and the tanks are always ready against defenceless Soviets. But no tank attack will abolish the demand of our productive forces to introduce other relations of production, Particularly considering the fact that tanks must have fighting efficiency not only in peaceful cities but also in a real war.

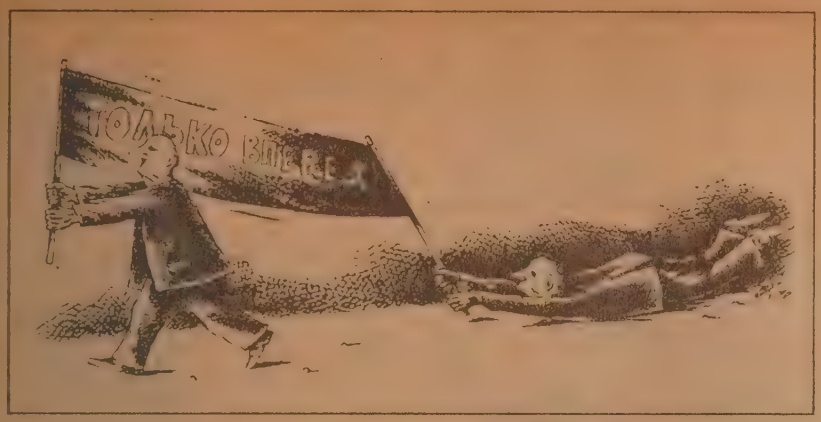
Since the economy and the state have merged into a well-knit chimera to restore the objective criteria of economic life, the state must detach itself from the economy and encourage a part of it to act independently, refusing in the future to correct its mistakes, write off debts, supply with raw materials and state-placed order. It is necessary to help the jobless and not unprofitable enterprises. But they have become accustomed to being dependent on the state's demands of it: "feed me" instead of "let us feed ourselves." When the economy is pluralistic the legislative and financial functions of the state make it possible to discern what is actually taking place and correct the weak points economically, i.e. to exercise real control and management. The trouble lies in that everyone is sure that the vast economy of the huge country can be run like one big factory. This is the reason why sovereignty is demanded everywhere, in the hope that Byelorussia or Uzbekistan, being independent, perhaps will respond to management with the present methods, whereas the Union no longer yields to it. The economy is falling apart not from a lack of power but from an excess of it.

Two age-old obstacles

Why all this? What is the reason that there is nothing to eat. Naturally, the reason was the civil war in 1921, and collectivization early in the 1930s; the Great Patriotic War in the second half of the 1940s. But what is the reason today? It seems that there have been neither wars, particular crop failures or follies of the leaders comparable with the former ones, following the death of Stalin. What was the reason behind the decline of the economy in the 1970s, that continues up to this day? Reasonable calls for effectiveness, for perestroika and the market do not work. Impoverishment only keeps growing. No, it was neither the fault of "destructive forces," nor of democrats or even the "black colonels" but of prolonged repudiation by the country of realities, the habit of seeing only what is prescribed by ideology. It is, therefore, not fortuitous that people in our country often shirk reforms fearing unpredictable consequences, but not afraid of the consequences of idleness that cannot be anticipated.

A well-known collective farm chairman said at the Congress of people's deputies that a collective farmer wishing to become an individual farmer must buy off his plot from the collective farm. And the huge hall with Lenin's portrait in the background did not react to this at all. No one sprang to his feet to tell the speaker that the revolution triumphed in October, 1917 and the

IS GOING ON
WHAT
WILL BE



Drawing by V. Semerenko

Decree on the Land was adopted, under which it was being transferred free of charge to needy peasants. With the premonition of the anarchy of annexations and confiscations, it even contained a special stipulation that "the lands of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks are not to be confiscated."

Some other person explained to the peoples of the Baltic republics that a referendum wasn't held not only when they were joined to the USSR but also when they gained independence. And again no person mentioned that the first decree of the revolution was the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia, under which all peoples acquired the right to free self-determination including the right to secede and many of them used this right at that time. Is it really permissible today to tell Finns or Poles that their independence is not quite lawful since it was obtained without a referendum? Are the Estonians worse than Finns, are the Lithuanians worse than Poles? It was the revolution that gave them independence. They remember this but we have forgotten.

There have been two obstacles lying for centuries in the path to our country's normal development – the agrarian and nationality questions. But even in its fatal hours, the tsarist government did not do more than give only partial concessions.

What must be preserved?

If one really wants order to be established but no other aspirations disguised with calls for it, it is necessary to cherish the harmoniously forming centres of order, and today there are, above all, the ethnic centres which manage to unite people for their protection from the monopoly-industrial brontosaur which is trampling down all our country with no consideration for anyone. Had the Centre been really concerned about order, it would meet the wishes of the republics half-way, receiving from each of them guarantees of observing human rights irrespective of nationality... But the Centre itself does not observe these rights. How should Moldavians react to the refusal to recognize their language as a State language in Moldova, when the draft Union Treaty declares Russian a state language for the entire Union in which tens of millions of people do not speak Russian. With different numbers for different peoples, the Centre aggravates ethnic contradictions to irreconcilable extremes, and people no longer notice that in the multinational districts of Russia, in the Urals, Leningrad and Moscow, the Centre defends just as zealously the exterritoriality of its ministries and unless it gives up this practice in reality it cannot count on anything but tanks.

When they say that "it is necessary to preserve the Union," what upsets me is not the word "Union" – all the peoples will only gain from equal community, just as close as the European where one has to present one's passport four times when travelling from Cologne to London, but this is no hindrance for moving from one place to another. What upsets me is the word "to preserve" since the ladder of inequality on which even the "first among equals" is restricted and forced to sacrifice oneself and its sons incessantly to preserve the ladder is no Union at all. Here too ideology triumphs over reality. They laugh in vain at the series of national sovereignties. The peoples must gain their independence in order to come to a voluntary accord.

When they say, "it is necessary to preserve socialism" what upsets me again is not the word "socialism." Modern production is ineffective without social guarantees, without the duty of society to man and not of man to society as was the case previously. Each man's free development is an earnest of free development for all, for the entire society. Sakharov's exile to Gorky is not only an example of a violation of human rights – developing freely, this genius could have found a way to solve the problem of thermonuclear energy, saving us from the impending energy crisis. In fact, tens of millions of people, even though not so talented, have no opportunity for free development and they are trying to suggest that we live under socialism.

The convulsion of the system

We have quickly done away with the achievements of the October Revolution: the land is now the property of collective farms, the people have no rights and the happy reign of socialism did not come.

So, having exhausted the resources, the system is going through a deep spasm which is not to be relieved only by reducing the foreign policy load. But the first place in the disputes as to what must be done is held by fear for socialism. Meanwhile, in the face of our feudal system, this fear is just as absurd as were Lenin's reproaches with apostacy when proclaiming the NEP (New Economic Policy). At that time hundreds of thousands of communists returned their party membership cards not wishing to renounce war communism. Even today most communists oppose the rehabilitation of Lenin's decision of long standing which is quite topical even today.

I realize that the very assumption of the fact that in the October Revolution there was at least something inevitable and not only ill-intentioned, will arouse today only fury and arrogant contempt among many people. For them, the October Revolution is only the beginning of subsequent horrors: from the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly to the bloody Sunday in Vilnius with the GULAG somewhere in-between. It is not acceptable today to think why the uprising that poured out in October could not, long before it, take a quieter course. Others, on the contrary, declared as the achievement of the October Revolution not what was accomplished in those days, but the forcible building of socialism in a peasants' country, and are reluctant to give up this fiction. But the revolutionary decrees of the Second Congress of Soviets contained the possibility of a different life than ours, which was missed, above all, because the people of those years – Bolsheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and white generals believed strongly in their right to decide for other people, believed that a strong government would overcome shortcomings in social development. But it cannot overcome them and only aggravates them. Meanwhile, the renunciation of reforms has aroused again thirst for strong power, the renunciation of even the cautious Shatalin-Yavlinsky programme brought about the events in Lithuania. One must understand this because only by realizing the futility of taking decisions by force the country obtains new hope.

The Tsar's stubbornness sparked off the events of January 9 and three revolutions over a period of 12 years. Stolypin's formula "first reassurance and then reforms" did not save the country or Pyotr Arkadievich himself. So, is it worth teasing again the demon of history and place our trust in Kornilov or another chief of a garrison? Wouldn't it be more sensible to help at last the economy out of direct state control and eliminate the all-powerful feudal ministries and departments that have fettered life so that people could live on the results of their labour? In fact, only worthy living standards of honest citizens bring reassurance to the country.

■

WAR IN THE GULF

YANKS GO TO WAR... AND HOME?

The world pays Saddam's bills

Alexander Pumpyansky

The Soviet leadership's dramatic attempt to find solution to the Gulf crisis and prevent more bloodshed failed. The Americans came to feel that Saddam had gone too far to be let off the hook. What is left for us is to count the losses and compare the ends with the means. Some preliminary results of the war with regard to this country can already be discussed.

Since the very start of Saddam's adventure two approaches have dominated Soviet policy. They may be loosely defined as the Shevardnadze line and the Primakov line. The Shevardnadze line was expressed in the unprecedented, and as such, sensational joint declaration of the Soviet foreign minister and the US secretary of state, and in the Soviet Union's unequivocal stand at the United Nations: the aggression must not be tolerated, the world community of nations must do its best to prevent the aggressor from enjoying the fruits of his aggression, and if necessary issue a mandate allowing the use of armed force to dislodge Saddam from Kuwait.

The Primakov line incorporated repeated attempts to exploit privileged relations, including personal ones, to find a way out of the blind alley.

The Shevardnadze line was that of strategic option and principle. The Primakov line was tactical and pragmatic. After all, a politician's practical value lies in his ability to seek and find various options and the real Soviet policy was based on a combination of the two approaches.

The professional analysis of how fruitful this combination was is yet to be made. At the moment it is more important to note one thing: despite all their differences, these two lines were elements of one strategy. A different strategy might have been opted for as well: the Soviet Union might have supported Saddam – directly or otherwise, for example by distancing itself from the United States – that's not important here. This would have been an approach straight out of the past. A pro-Saddam stance was actively lobbied for in this country's parliament and media by a chorus of voices chanting traditional patriotic, anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist slogans and singing praise to the Soviet military industrial complex. It does credit to the Soviet leadership that this option was never considered seriously.

On the other hand, the Soviet policy was caught in the crossfire between the hard-to-change past and the hard-to-achieve future. Saddam is an aggressor and a criminal of course, but, then again, he is a time-tested ally and a payer of hard currency. At last we have established civilized relations

The Gulf crisis' lesson: never do business with dictators!

of partnership with our former archenemy – the US – but to rejoice at the triumph of US military might is too much for us. Haven't the Americans been too willing to put on the uniform of a global policeman? Won't the US gain too fat a political dividend from the Gulf crisis?

The longer the war continued, the more problems arose. The independence of Kuwait was of importance, of course. But was this excuse enough to bomb Iraq back into Stone Age? Can the triumph of international justice be paid for with human sufferings? Why should Iraqis pay for the crimes of their president?

Diplomatic subtleties aside, the Americans had one major reason to reject the Gorbachev settlement scheme: the US could not be satisfied with the restoration of the status quo alone. The aggressor had to be punished. Saddam must be eliminated. Iraq's military potential must be destroyed. Undoubtedly, these objectives are outside the UN mandate. However, had there been a European power that could have stopped and crushed Hitler in 1933-1939, without waiting for him to start a world war, there would have hardly been any protests referring to the absence of a League of Nations mandate.

On the other hand, innocent people had to be killed. No war is acceptable. Any use of force is fraught with arrogance, imperial instincts and the cult of force.

The questions of the armoured fist aren't far-fetched. The situation was complicated by the fact that it could not be resolved within the confines of formal law or morality. Who was to blame for the fact that Saddam did not understand any language except the language of war?

Having violated all norms of international law, Saddam robbed himself of the protection of international law. Having rejected common sense arguments and warnings, Saddam allowed his opponents to resort to extreme measures.

Dictators honour no human law, only the laws they make themselves. Only a dictatorship can turn tourists and POWs into hostages,publicly torture POWs, use civilians as a living shield and take its own nation hostage.

Only a dictatorship can commit a global ecological crime by declaring war on the sea, sky and earth.

Dictatorship is a crime and a threat to humanity. Unfortunately, very often the metastases of dictatorship cannot be cured by the therapy of tolerance and democracy. The moment comes when a malignant dictatorship can only be removed by the surgery of war. The Americans should not be blamed for their having volunteered to take on this unrewarding task.

Unfortunately, this country again is in an ambiguous position: it supports the anti-Saddam coalition but is not a member of that coalition. The Soviet Union is torn between its superpower status and the syndromes of Afghanistan, Tbilisi, Vilnius, etc. We would like to start a new life, but the old sins drag us back into the past.

We have received many signals and signs of warning that the Saddam regime was a criminal one and we should not have done any business with it. When Saddam cracked down on his political opponents, including communists. When he gassed restive Kurds; when he attacked Iran... More than enough reasons to stop helping Baghdad. Instead, we preferred to gag the press at home, fearing that the dictator might be offended. We used to believe that some supreme state interests commanded that we assist Saddam with weapons and military advisors. Now we are paying off old debts.

Any dictatorship starts by oppressing its own people and ends with committing crimes against humanity. The main lesson of the gulf crisis is that courting a dictator never pays.

But even today there are potential Saddams among our friends.

Will Iraq outlive Saddam Hussein?

What will become of Iraq after Hussein's defeat? What changes might take place in the Middle East?

Speaking in the US Congress, Secretary of State Baker said he believed an economic rebuilding of the region affected by war, including Iraq, was an important task of the post-war US policy in the Middle East. Europe is dicussing the idea of creating a Middle Eastern Bank for Reconstruction and Development which could be mostly financed by rich Gulf states. Many believe that a Marshall Plan for the Middle East may be the magical formula that will solve all problems. Naturally, some redistribution of petrodollars between rich and poor Arab states could improve the situation in the region, but what really matters is radical changes.

Only under occupation

The Americans have a lot of experience of reshaping former dictatorships, but this experience is already forty years old. West Germany and Japan were subject to comprehensive programmes of political, economic, legal and social changes which radically altered the future of these two states.

Could this experiment be repeated in the Middle East?

It might if the starting conditions are the same: Iraq is completely occupied, the Iraqi army stops resisting, a new government is formed in Baghdad which agrees to rebuild the country under foreign control.

On the other hand, the whole of Iraq can only be occupied as a result of a protracted ground war, if Saddam decides to sacrifice all his troops to fight the allies to the last soldier and if Saddam's generals agree to this prospect. This is the worst variant for the Americans and their allies: the losses will be great, despite all the attempts to minimize them. What variant would the Americans like? The military defeat of the Iraqi troops in Kuwait and the toppling of Saddam by his own generals. Or at least the destruction of Iraq's war machine to the degree which will make it impossible for Saddam to plan any new military adventures.

This does mean, however, that even after a crippling military defeat, Iraq will continue to be ruled by the Saddam regime, whose ideology incorporates the merciless crushing of dissidence inside the country and territorial expansion at its neighbours' expense. The Saddam regime will continue using nationalist slogans against Iran (with which it still has border disputes) and Israel and socialist slogans against rich Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Iraq will continue to be a military dictatorship under which Nazi ideas (which had been vastly atheist in Europe) are based on Islamic fundamentalism. This is a strong alloy. The national-socialist regimes of the past were all crushed by an external force, not from within.

Good guys and bad guys

This pessimistic forecast reflects the general situation in the Middle East. The 40-year-old conflict between Israel and the Arabs has contributed greatly to the aggravation of the Middle Eastern conflict and determined the ways and means of inter-state relations in the region, but it has nothing in common with inter-Arab frictions and wars.

In each individual situation, the world community distinguishes between good Middle Eastern states and bad ones, but this division is very relative. During the Iran-Iraq war, Iraq was the "good" party and the United States and Western Europe secretly assisted it. Today Syria ranks among the "good" states because the old feud within the Baath party and personal antagonism between Syria's Assad and Iraq's Saddam moved Damascus to join the coalition. If the situation changes, Washington will readily return to its old view of Syria as "a dictatorial regime encouraging terrorists and violating human rights." In 1982, the Syrian security service and army killed 25,000 people suppressing popular unrest. Syria's vacuum in the "bad" row was promptly filled by Jordan's King Hussein whom the circumstances forced to support Baghdad. Traditionally, King Hussein was viewed as a moderate, reasonable and pro-western politician; he even maintained secret contacts with the Israeli government. The *Jerusalem Post* says that the king has secretly visited Israel on a number of occasions and is personally acquainted with many Israeli politicians. King Hussein was said to have promised to sign a peace treaty with Israel, but explained the delay in the signing by the furious opposition to such a treaty on the part of the population of Jordan which vas-

Iraqi POWs. The Iraqi troops and the whole nation are paying for their president's adventure

tly consists of Palestinians. In its turn, Israel has warned King Hussein about several Palestinian conspiracies to kill him and twice saved Jordan from a Syrian invasion by informing Amman that Israel would not remain aloof to such an invasion.

Middle Eastern regimes are believed to be unstable. Military coups, killings and topplings of presidents and mergers of states are not infrequent here, but the authoritarian and theocratic regimes are more stable because they are more isolated from external influence and keep internal processes on a short leash. In this context it is difficult to speak about a Marshall Plan or serious post-war changes. Another factor must not be ignored: the hatred for the West, in particular the United States, which spreads from the Persian Gulf across to Maghrib. In forty odd years the Arab East has formed a stable infrastructure of spiritual opposition to all things Western. The hatred for the US is fomented in inverse proportion to how badly the Arab states need America: as a guarantor of survival (Saudi Arabia), supplier of arms (Egypt), or mediator for indirect contacts with Israel (Syria and the PLO).

Shiites, Sunnites, Kurds

Last September, James Baker said in Washington that he intended to establish new security structures in the Gulf region which will require a US military presence there. If the US Secretary of State meant the deployment of a US contingent in Saudi Arabia or liberated Kuwait or the setting up of a permanent Air Force or Navy base there, the results of such a strategy may be even more tragic than what happened in 1982 in Lebanon, when a blast destroyed the barracks of US Marines urgently posted to Beirut. The US military presence in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait may destroy the monarchies in Riyadh and El Kuwait and new Saddams or Khomeinis may appear in the Gulf region.

It is possible to use UN peace-keepers to promote security in the neutral zone between Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The US Administration could provide relief to war victims and refugees and supervise reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Kuwait. The UN committee for sanctions will continue its work: it is necessary to halt all arms supplies to Baghdad and to rule out the possibility of Iraq's importation of technologies used in the production of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and all types of ballistic and cruise missiles.

The UN Security Council could set up an ad hoc military tribunal to punish Iraqi leaders for war crimes committed in the Gulf. On the other hand, the sentences passed by the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals were carried out only because Germany and Japan were completely ruled by the Allied occupation authorities. Nothing of this kind will be possible in Iraq because in this case the tribunal judges' words will have no effect and the Arab media will raise hue and cry, condemning the tribunal's decisions as humiliating and insulting to the Arab world.

What will really follow the military defeat of Iraq?

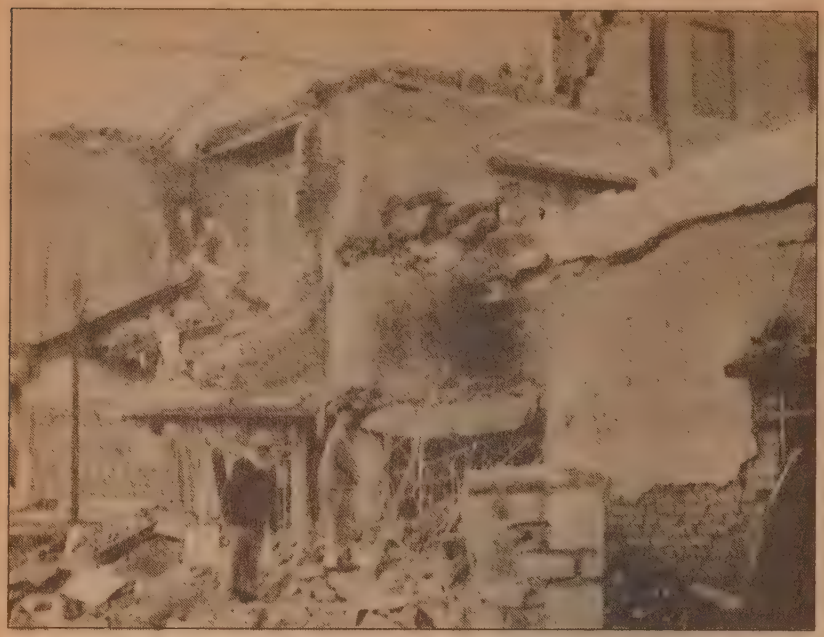
First and foremost, Iraq where power is in the hands of a small Sunnite minority, will be in danger itself. The Shiite majority heavily influenced by neighbouring Iran and three million Kurds who repeatedly took arms to defend their rights but were brutally suppressed by Baghdad, may go into rebellion. Ankara has suddenly remembered that the Iraqi area of Mossul once belonged to Turkey. Iran also has serious territorial claims and may be tempted to provide protection for the "oppressed" Iraqi Shiites.

The neighbours' desire to benefit territorially from the Iraqi military defeat may result in complete disintegration of Iraq, which even Baghdad's archenemies do not want.

King Hussein and Arafat

The position of King Hussein of Jordan has become precarious. Palestinians make up over fifty percent of Jordan's population and are demanding arms to attack Israel. The king fears war most of all, realizing that his throne will become the very first war loss. He agreed to see rep-

Many experts believed US troops would not be successful in the ground war, but the allied air raids have undermined the potential and morale of the Iraqis



Could a Marshall Plan help restore war-ravaged Iraq and Kuwait?

resentatives of the Moslem Brotherhood in his government, supported Saddam, allowed Iraq to fire Scuds at Israel across the territory of Jordan and warned Israel that Israeli planes would be downed by the Jordanian air defence if Jerusalem opts to retaliate. These moves did not satisfy the Palestinians, but only made Israel's stance tougher. King Hussein's throne may crack under the dual pressure.

Yasser Arafat is living through one more crisis. His unconditional support of Saddam damaged his international image and justified the stance of Jerusalem which refuses to negotiate "with the leader of a terrorist organization which wants to eliminate Israel as a state." At the same time, Arafat is under attack from Palestinian militants who believe he should have opened a second front against Israel and US together with Saddam. There are intensive speculations about who may replace Arafat as leader of the PLO, but they may prove premature. Yasser Arafat's political demise has already been predicted but each time he has managed to emerge unscathed from what seemed to be hopeless situations and to regain control over the PLO. Arafat's survivability, however, is not the main aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Iraqi missile attacks against Israel, which is not a member of the anti-Saddam coalition, gave substance to Jerusalem's conviction that the Arabs will seize at any opportunity to destroy "the Zionist entity." These sentiments are absolutely not in favour of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. After the Gulf war ends, Israel will be busy building up its military security. The Israelis used to believe that their powerful air force always prepared to fly off and destroy hostile launchers was a sufficiently reliable guarantee. The allies' long and not very successful hunt for Iraqi Scuds has convinced the Israeli top brass that Israel needs a missile arsenal of its own.

Israel's serious drive to re-equip its armed forces with more sophisticated weapons will provoke a similar response by Syria which has been promised additional Soviet military aid. When governments are busy upgrading their armies, they are little inclined to talk of peace.

Does this mean that hopes for peace in the Middle East after the Gulf war are in vain?

An international peace conference?

In general, it is naive to cherish any illusions about the Middle East. Naturally, there may always be unexpected turns of events like the one that resulted in the Egyptian-Israeli rapprochement more than a decade ago. There are signs that Syria's Assad has matured for peace talks. He is not young any more and has little time left to sit on his hands, assured that time works against Israel. The experience of past wars leaves nothing of Assad's hopes to drive Israel out of the Golan Heights Syria lost in 1967. Meanwhile, a return of the Golan Heights would become the triumph of Assad's political career.

After the Iraqi campaign, the United States will have to pay its Arab allies for their support. Washington is expected to bring pressure to bear on Israel and President Bush will have to show the Arabs that the US wants the Jerusalem government to start negotiations.

Western European states and the United Nations will put forward the idea of an international peace conference for the Middle East. This proposal seems attractive, but the commonly acceptable formula of such a conference has not yet been worked out in the four decades of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Henry Kissinger, America's best brain in Middle Eastern diplomacy wrote in Newsweek that he would not envy any state volunteering to act as a mediator between the Arabs and Israel. The occupation of Kuwait confirmed the well-known fact that in the Middle East, force is the only respected argument and that no legal documents will save the weaker states there from aggression. If the Arabs laid waste to another Arab country, what would they do to "the Zionist entity"?

The Kuwaiti crisis has demonstrated the importance of Soviet-American cooperation. The joint declaration by Shevardnadze and Baker was the foundation that made it possible to restore international justice. Moscow and Washington's consensus on such issues as arms trade, regional diplomacy and Middle Eastern problems is the most realistic point of departure from which to seek peaceful solutions.

Unfortunately, this consensus is actively opposed by certain influential circles which will try to talk President Gorbachev out of cooperation with the United States. A misinterpreted vision of state interests, personal ambitions and paranoid anti-Americanism determine the stance of the Soviet military-industrial complex and Communist Party hardliners. Besides this, the leaders of the Soviet Islamic movement will also oppose Soviet-American cooperation in the Middle East.

It must be understood that if this pressure on Gorbachev has an effect, prospects for a Middle Eastern settlement will remain gloomy.

Leonid Mlechin

Photos by TASS and from Newsweek (USA)

Who armed Iraq?

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has estimated that in the 1980s Iraq had the highest rate of the military spendings growth. In 1984 Iraq had a record-setting military budget of $33.3 billion, but in 1989 (that is after the war with Iran ended), Iraq's military spendings also amounted to an impressive $15 billion.

In ten years Baghdad has spent over $80 billion on purchasing arms – more than Great Britain ($69.5 billion), France (68.6 billion) or the FRG ($41.3 billion).

Countries members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Oman) have also been spending heavily on defence. In 1990 the Saudi military budget equalled the military budget of Iraq. However, Baghdad retained a great preponderance in manpower: 1 million Iraqi soldiers against a 165,000-strong Saudi army. The armies of Iraq's neighbours are poorly trained and poorly prepared for joint action. Coupled with the lack of combat experience, these factors seriously limit the capabilities of the Gulf states' armies. Remarkably, the Gulf Cooperation Council has been financing the Iraqi military buildup (the Arab monarchies were more afraid of the Khomeini regime in Iran) and today the Iraqi debt to the Council amounts to a half of Saddam's overall $70 to 80 billion external debt.

Iraq was also buying arms from over twenty other countries, but 80 percent of the imported weapons came from three permanent members of the UN Security Council: the Soviet Union ($13.396 billion or 53 percent), France ($5.054 billion or 20 percent) and China ($1.664 billion or 7 percent). Soviet arms supplies have dropped from the record-setting $2.162 billion in 1986 to 0.12 billion in 1989. Iraq owes Fr.25 billion to France and R3.7 billion to the USSR in war debts.

Soviet-made weapons in the Iraqi inventory: Scud missiles and MIG-29

Baghdad managed to create a national defence industry extensively using the assistance from the Soviet Union, Egypt and some Western European firms. As a result, Iraq is self-sufficient as far as artillery and tank munitions are concerned and can produce MLRS and ballistic missiles. Published below is the SIPRI list of weapon systems provided to Iraq by the Soviet Union.

US Patriot misiles have been effective in downing Scuds

Photos from L'Express (France) and U.S. News & World Report

Designation	Mission	Time of transfer	Qnty
Aircraft			
Il-76 Candid	transport	1980-84	19
Mi-24 Hind-C	helicopter	1983-84	10
Mi-8 Hip	helicopter	1983-84	30
MIG-21 bis	fighter	1983-84	61
MIG-23 BN	fighter/ground attack	1984-85	50
MIG-25	fighter/interceptor	1979-85	55
MIG-25R	reconnaissance plane	1979-82	8
MIG-29	fighter	1985-89	64
Su-20 Fitter-C	fighter/ground attack	1973-85	110
Su-25 Frogfoot	fighter/ground attack	1985-87	40
Su-7 Fitter	fighter	1982-84	30
Armoured vehicles			
2S1 122 mm	self-propelled howitzer	1986	80
2S3 152 mm	self-propelled gun	1986	80
BM-21 122 mm	multiple rocket launcher	1984-86	560
BRDM-2 Gaskin	anti-aircraft vehicle (missile)	1982-88	30
D30 122 mm	towed howitzer	1982-88	576
MT-LB	armoured personnel carrier	1982	800
PT-76	light tank	1983-84	200
Saddam 122 mm	towed howitzer	1988	50
T-62	main battle tank	1982	1,000
T-72	main battle tank	1985	700
Missile systems			
SA-6	mobile surface-to-air missile system	1979-87	52
SA-8	mobile surface-to-air missile system	1982-87	36
SA-6 Gainful	land mobile surface-to-air missile system	1982-87	520
SA-8 Gecko	land mobile surface-to-air missile system	1982-87	432
SA-9 Gaskin	land mobile surface-to-air missile system	1982-87	240
SS-21 Launcher	mobile surface-to-surface missile system	1985-86	12
Missiles			
AA-2 Atoll	air-to-air missile	1975-85	1,300
AA-6 Acrid	air-to-air missile	1984-85	60
AA-7 Apex	air-to-air missile	1984-87	360
AA-8 Aphid	air-to-air missile	1984-87	500
AS-14 Kedge	air-to-surface missile	1988	40
AS-4 Kitchen	air-to-surface missile	1983-84	24
AS-6 Kingfish	air launched cruise missile	1983-84	36
AT-3 Sagger	anti-tank missile	1981-82	500
AT-3 Sagger	anti-tank missile	1982-84	1,000
SS-21 Scarab	surface-to-surface missile	1985-86	36
Scud-B	surface-to-surface missile	1985	350

SIPRI materials processed by Alexander Polyukhov, our own correspondent

STOCKHOLM

New Times asked Chief of the Main Engineering Directorate of the USSR Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations Vice-Admiral Valentin Vlasov to comment on the SIPRI data. The Vice-Admiral said he was too busy to comment on every such publication.

Requiem for the Treaty

The resolution on dissolving the Warsaw Treaty Organization's military setup has passed almost unnoticed against the background of more sensational world developments

Pyotr Gladkov,
Cand. Sc. (History)

It was, perhaps, for reasons of prestige, that the Soviet Union has denied the inevitability of the Warsaw Pact denunciation for so long, despite the fact that the disappearance of the ideological factor, which determined East-West relations throughout the postwar period, has reduced the importance of WTO to zero as far as Moscow is concerned – if not to a negative value.

Why alliances break apart

The sanitary cordon around the USSR might have made sense in the early postwar years. With the advent and development of nuclear weapons, however, WTO began to lose steadily in military importance, as the ideological factor came to the forefront. Those adhering to the idea of socialist choice have regarded WTO not so much as a means of repelling Western aggression – the likelihood of which has always been doubted by realistically-minded politicians – but as an illustration of socialism's ability to survive in economically and politically advanced countries.

The very existence of the military alliance became ever more counterproductive for the USSR because the enormous expenditures involved in keeping it up did not return any military-political advantages. What's more, since the mid-eighties the presence of a mighty and highly integrated military machine – in a situation where political interaction among WTO member states kept declining – increasingly entered into contradiction with the new foreign policy line proclaimed by Moscow.

It appears that the demise of the Warsaw Treaty Organization is indicative of the overall trend of modern international relations – away from military alliances.

For quite a while, both superpowers ignored the objective decline in their respective alliances' value. Both the USA and the USSR kept strengthening the military-political blocs confronting one another, lengthening the "escalation ladder," working out various means of waging a limited nuclear war, as if oblivious of the fact that a changing world situation called for a new approach to the strengthening of national security.

From any standpoint, the importance of the Warsaw Treaty to the Soviet Union was most dubious (in the late eighties, anyway), and it could be used only as a trump card at negotiations over the future security arrangements in Europe. After the East European revolutions had broken out, it became clear that even this function was increasingly difficult for WTO to discharge.

Price of freedom

What does the dissolution of WTO mean to its former Eastern and Central European members? The period of Soviet domination amounted to historical stagnation to them because now it turns out that over that period they haven't actually made any progress at all. After the elation over the release from the Big Brother's iron grip had died down, it transpired that none of the problems believed to have been solved over the past forty years had actually been dealt with. What's more, time was lost, the country's economic and social ills were neglected and became chronic. Today the region's burning national, ethnic and border issues have added up to produce a situation reminiscent to some observers of that on the eve of World War I.

After Moscow had relinquished its hold over Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the prospect of mini-wars, fierce ethnic conflicts, and separatist violence becomes imminent and gives Europeans a legitimate cause for anxiety.

As a result, East European countries will have to pay a rather high price over a rather long period, for the political and ideological freedom they have acqwired.

As of today, the biggest external threat to East European countries emanates, surprisingly, from their former patron. Everything will depend on the development of the domestic situation in the USSR, and it is not ruled out that Moscow may demand weightier compensations for having released its former allies. All the more so since the allies themselves have, perhaps, gone too far in demonstrating their newfound independence (at the conventional arms limitation talks, for finstance) as they tried to keep their armed forces at the expense of larger Soviet troop reductions.

Did it pay to rush things?

For Europe as a whole, the abolition of the Warsaw Pact proved by no means as easy a matter as it was thought to be until quite recently.

First fo all, anyone can see now that for all its drawbacks the much criticized old order of things on the continent, based on confrontation between two military-political blocs, possessed two merits, at least – it was stable and predictable. The dominant powers had the situation under strict control and kept their allies within the bounds of reason. Besides, any crisis lends itself to settlement more readily if dealt with by two parties involved than by a conglomerate of ten or more states each looking after its own interest.

Second, the absence of the Pact rather gives the Soviet Union a free hand. In any case, the Soviet Union is, and will remain, a dominant power on the European continent especially in a situation where the Americans are preoccupied with the Middle East and where the Soviet Union keeps its heavy weapons (even though beyond the Urals) subject to scrapping under the Paris Treaty.

Besides that, the Soviet Union has a serious means of bringing pressure upon its former allies – the Soviet troops still staying on their territories. There are indications already that certain quarters, military ones above all, are prepared to use this leverage.

Germany has a special role to play here. As the chances of the USSR Supreme Soviet ratifying the Soviet-German Treaty are diminishing, and what with the Soviet troops to remain on its territory until 1994, Moscow retains strong trump cards which it may try to use to bring Bonn under pressure. All the more so

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

since Germany is interested in the USSR as a natural partner in consolidating its new status in Europe.

Finally, the outlook for NATO is also vague. On the one hand, there is the school of thought that the abolition of WTO will call the legitimacy of NATO in question. On the other hand, those who want NATO to stay on argue that this organization may serve as the basis of a new European security structure.

The Pact is dead. Long live...

Without a doubt, NATO will remain – in the foreseeable future, at least. What's more, the former WTO member states are seeking ways of getting integrated into Atlantic structures for the purpose of making themselves secure against the threat on the part of a destabilized Soviet Union and strengthening their links with the West European community.

The formation of subregional security structures may offer former WTO member states another chance of integration. In any case this will be only the first step because sooner or later they will have to become part of a broader pan-European structure.

What will this structure be like after the two blocs are gone? In all probability, the future European Security System (ESS) will emerge as a result of a rather long period of transition from confrontation to cooperation. This is going to be a political-military system intended chiefly to create a united Europe in which no country will feel isolated or wronged. In the period of transition to an integrated Europe, the ESS's main job will be to ensure stability in those parts of the continent where the abolition of once allied relations may result in a relapse into nationalism, ethnic violence, or border conflicts.

If it is to function efficiently, such a system is supposed to possess certain characteristics.

First, it ought to comprise multilateral European conflict-settling institutions and mechanisms based on principles of international law as applied to the most likely sources of would-be conflicts – ethnic ones, above all.

Second, the member states of the system ought to be prepared to delegate part of the sovereignty to it lest the United Nations' mistakes be repeated. All the key resolutions are to be passed by a qualified majority because the right to exercise a veto would block the whole system from the very outset.

Third, it should be empowered to impose sanctions on any country which feels itself free to ignore all-European efforts towards a peaceful settlement of a conflict and to resort to violence.

The new European security system will work only given a dense network of political, economic and other kinds of interdependence, as well as a balance of forces which, following a radical arms reduction, would prevent any of the countries from attacking the joint defence forces of all the other members of the system.

Initially, the ESS is to be based on the security structures which already exist. NATO may have the key role to play here provided it shifts the emphasis to politics.

If reforms are carried on successfully in the USSR, the Soviet Union and NATO will arrive at some form of military-political integration or other which will actually mark the completion of the transition period and the beginning of a new European security system.

If reforms are blocked in the USSR, the latter will find itself in isolation on the continent with the result that the war threat will grow again, and that stability in Europe and in the rest of the world will be impaired.

With the abolition of the Warsaw Pact, another relic of the cold war will disappear.

■

Leva, dollars, oil and love

On the half-way to a market economy

The first step towards a market economy was made in Bulgaria with the determination of a man who cannot swim but jumped into icy water from a nine-metre high tower. The prices of some food products have risen sharply of late. A loaf of bread now costs 2.3 leva (sixfold), one litre of milk 2.85 leva (sevenfold), a kilo of boiled sausage 36 leva (tenfold), one egg 0.95 leva (eightfold), a kilo of pork 42 leva (fivefold). Telephone and telex charges are expected to increase two to four times and transport fair four to seven times.

Under its agreement with two trade union centres – the Confederation of Independent Syndicates and the Confederation Podkrepa – the government pledged to control the prices of 16 staple food products and a number of services. So far the pledge remains a good intention.

Despite the promise to compensate for the growth of prices, the life of the poor sections (pensioners, students and young families) will be very hard. Old people in towns will suffer from cold and hunger because their pensions are obviously not enough to pay for food and heating. Furthermore, compensations to be paid in March only if the enterprises obtain money for this purpose. The system of a reliable social security of the poor does not exist in the country.

"The first step towards a market economy will most likely affect the press," Premier Dimitr Popov admitted reluctantly the other day. The shortage of newsprint and a nearly 20-fold rise in its cost can lead to the bankruptcy of many newspapers. This circumstance became a subject of heated debates in the parliament. Also worrying is the fact that the new prices will affect most painfully the popular independent periodicals which have not been able to create stocks of newsprint bought through unofficial channels.

For instance, the newspapers of the alternative Socialist Party, the Green Party, and a number of local periodicals are not published any longer. Such newspapers as *Trud*, *Vecherni Novini* and *Otechestven Vestnik* and the weekly *Styrshel* are under the threat of being closed. The national radio has reduced its programmes because of financial difficulties. In the period of rising prices the Bulgarian telegraph agency BTA already has a deficit of more than 15 million leva.

At the same time, a number of government and privately-owned periodicals do not experience difficulties. It is alleged, for instance, that, taking advantage of its monopoly position and "unofficial ties," the Bulgarian socialist newspaper *Duma* has provided a stock of newprint for two years ahead. Such newspapers as *168 Hours, O'kay* and *Kurier 5*, linked with semi-legal firms and cooperatives, are prospering too.

Experts contend that new prices will help to saturate the market and do away with monstrous queues. However, they are unlikely to solve the country's energy problem. There is no oil now and there will be no oil in the foreseeable future. The oil refineries in Burgas and Pleven are using only ten percent of their capacities. Black market dealers profit by the sale of oil at higher prices. Bakeries, mills, factories and heat and power plants in large cities are coming to a standstill because of the lack of fuel oil. In a number of districts schools have been closed for a time because the classrooms are not heated.

Let's hope it will be warm in March," Prof. Lyudmil Genov, the new head of the Energy Committee, said recently. He thinks that the nuclear fuel at the Kozlodui atomic power plant will be exhausted in the first half of March. The Bulgarian heat and power plants are operating at half capacity because of the shortage of coal and spare parts.

In these circumstances the expectations of economic prosperity after the break-up of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and of dollar injections are rapidly evaporating. It is clear even to non-professionals that, though Moscow does not print dollars, it has a sufficient amount of oil, gas, timber, coal and metals. These raw materials have stable prices on the world markets while Bulgarian tomatoes, storage battery cars and computers of the obsolete type will hardly be much in demand in the competition with high-quality goods from Japan, European and other countries. There's not much ground for joy.

In the tough everyday life, in bread and milk queues, ordinary people do not have much time to take interest in politics. They are reacting with apathy to the news about the Gulf war. Mikhail Gorbachev's statement about the forthcoming dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organization has alarmed only a few "hard-line" Communists for whom Moscow is still the political barometer. Even President Zhelev's announcement that the parliamentary and local elections might be postponed has not caused a scandal, though some people regard it as a violation of the agreement reached earlier.

"Traditional love" for the big Soviet brother remains so far. It seemed that it would survive, though greatly impaired by cuts in oil supply. However, disappointment with the actions of the riot police and troops in Lithuania and Latvia (as a result of which the affectionate "Gorbie" was replaced by official "Comrade Gorbachev") will apparently finish with "brotherly love," giving way to normal mutual relations.

Towns are growing, but there are no sheep
Drawing from the newspaper Duma (Bulgaria)

Ventseslav Tsolov
SOFIA

Disarmament and security

Three people's deputies of the USSR put 15 questions to the outgoing Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in the newspaper *Domostroi*. The issue of the newspaper with their artidcle came out at the end of January when a new foreign minister was appointed, but the witch-hunt goes on

Alexei Arbatov,
D.Sc. (History)

The masterminds of the witch-hunt are trying to prove that East-West agreements on disarmament and other problems reached in the last few years have undermined the Soviet Union's security.

How many tanks are there in the Soviet Union?

In their article published in *Domostroi* People's Deputies Alksnis, Kogan and Petrushenko attack mainly the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe signed in Paris last November.

The first question concerns the alignment of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Since the Warsaw Treaty Organization has virtually ceased to exist while Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Hungary "are inclined to move their troops to eastern rather than to western borders and do not conceal their intention to join NATO," the three deputies write, "the United States and NATO find it more advantageous in the present situation to recognize and maintain former structures in order to compel the Soviet Union to reduce its defence potential in the total estimate of the Warsaw Pact's forces." The deputies ask rhetorically: "What will be the alignment of forces if the armaments of the aforementioned East European countries are added to those of NATO?"

The break-up of the Warsaw Treaty Organization is to be regretted, of course. But it is a political, not military problem, and to lay the blame on the West for its virtual dissolution is at best groundless. We are paying for the consequences of our "allied" policy, for the way it was pursued in relation to the German Democratic Republic in 1953, Hungary in 1956, Czecho-Slovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1981. The position of our former allies in the future will depend first of all on Soviet policy. If the Soviet Union puts these countries on the list of its enemies and builds up its forces for confrontation with them, as the authors of the article in *Domostroi* actually propose, this will be the surest way to push them towards taking undesirable steps.

The criticism of the Paris Treaty is therefore not appropriate. It should be said that the Treaty provides certain guarantees of the Soviet Union's security against unforeseen changes in the future by setting ceilings for troops and armaments not only in Europe as a whole, but also in its various regions. In particular, the Treaty fixes the distribution of NATO troops 1,000 or more kilometres from our western borders. In Central Europe, excluding the territory of the former German Democratic Republic, the North Atlantic alliance is not allowed to maintain more than 7,500 tanks, 5,000 pieces of ordinance and 11,250 armoured vehicles, while the Soviet Union can have in its European territory 13,300 tanks, 13,700 pieces of ordinance and 20,000 armoured vehicles.

Should NATO decide to augment its forces in Central Europe and move them closer to our borders or should any of the East European countries join NATO, this would be a violation of the spirit and letter of the Treaty and give Moscow legal grounds to take retaliatory measures, in particular to increase its armed forces or move troops from beyond the Urals into the European part of its territory. This provision is a serious restraining factor, a guarantee against actions of this kind, provided the Treaty comes into effect. But for this purpose it is necessary to settle the differences created by some of the Soviet measures.

One more aspect of the Paris Treaty perturbs the three deputies. The Treaty, they write in their article, "virtually envisages a one-sided scrapping of tanks and armoured vehicles by the Soviet Union..." and, they add, "the dismantling of tanks will cost the Soviet people a pretty sum." The deputies propose saving money by putting armaments in dead storage in regions far away from Europe.

In fact, only a small portion of the Soviet tanks, which make up the difference between their initial number (41,500) and the ceiling set by the Treaty (13,300), are to be re-equipped for other purposes. During the past two and a half years, 16,000 tanks have been moved east of the Urals while 4,000 obsolete machines are to be scrapped. It turns out therefore that only 8,100 tanks will have to be physically eliminated. NATO is to cut its armoured forces by more than 5,000 tanks. How can one talk about one-sided disarmament if at the start of the talks the East had almost 30,000 more tanks than the West.

The massive transfer of Soviet weapons east of the Urals and the placing of some of them under the naval command with a view to avoiding big cuts is arousing profound discontent in the West. In the opinion of Western politicians, the country which has more armaments has to cut more of them to equal lower ceilings. With the exception of combat helicopters, the Soviet Union had more weapons of all types.

So the Treaty is not to blame. We should lay the blame on those who, taking advantage of the absence of control over them, built up mountains of armaments in previous decades, simultaneously

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

alleging that a "rough parity" existed between the two blocs on the European continent.

Since tens of thousands of units of combat equipment have been transferred beyond the Urals (incidentally, without notifying the partners in the talks and the Soviet parliament) it does not seem reasonable to bring them back to be scrapped. In this connection the three deputies propose a rational way out. In their opinion, the weapons transferred beyond the Urals could be laid up in storage under the control of the other party, with a subsequent scrapping in less rigid terms.

"The Treaty applies to the Soviet Union and NATO countries in Europe," the deputies write. "But to what extent does it concern US armed forces?" they ask. "Does this not mean that, in comparison to the United States, we are disarming unilaterally?" Accidentally, in a recent interview given to *Pravda*, the Soviet Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov also said that "he is much disturbed by unilateral concessions."

Indeed, US territory is not included in the zone of arms cuts, though the US conventional forces in Europe (from which, properly speaking, they could threaten us first of all) shall be limited and reduced by roughly 2,400 units of combat equipment. No less important is the fact that the treaty does not allow the United States to dispatch large contingents to Europe. That is not all, however. The Soviet territory east of the Urals also remains outside the Treaty. In Siberia and the Far East alone (Central Asia not included) the USSR originally had 12,600 tanks, 14,600 asrmoured vehicles, 16,400 guns and about 2,000 combat aircraft.

After the transfer of a portion of weapons from the European territory, the number of tanks in the two regions increased by 16,000 and the total weaponry rose by 60,000 units. As for the United States, it keeps about 10,000 tanks and 3,000 combat planes, including naval aircraft, on its territory and elsewhere (outside Europe).

It is true that only a portion of the Soviet forces stationed east of the Urals directly confronts the United States. There are other potential enemies there. The US forces do not directly confront the Soviet Union either. They are intended for use, say, in the Persian Gulf and other regions. For this reason there are no grounds to talk about the Soviet Union's unilateral disarmament in the face of the United States.

Concessions on missiles too?

The deputies assert that under the INF Treaty Moscow agreed to eliminate operational-tactical missiles OTR-23 (systems of the Oka or R-400 type) with a range of about 400 km, whereas the parties had discussed the scrapping of missiles with 500 km and longer ranges. They point out that in this way "considerable economic and military damage has been done to our country." Systems of this type, the deputies contend, are being deployed by NATO and the United States.

In fact, the inclusion of 200 Oka missiles in the treaty made it possible to eliminate 170 Pershing-1A missiles, ban the manufacture and installation of new Pershing-1B missiles. Moreover, West Germany pledged to remove 72 Pershing-1A missiles from its arsenal and not modernize them.

It is not true that NATO is now deploying new systems of this class. In the light of the INF Treaty and under the influence of other Soviet measures in the field of disarmament, the United States and NATO have given up plans to instal Lance-2 missiles with a longer range. At present they have only 120 old, Lance-1 missiles with a range of up to 150 km. Furthermore, France has 30 Pluto missiles of a similar type.

The Soviet Union has a 12-fold superiority in systems of this class in Europe alone. The development of the American air-to-ground missile system of the TASM type with a 500 km range remains undecided. It would not be out of place to recall that Soviet medium-range bombers have long been equipped with hundreds of air-to-ground double purpose missiles with a range of 180 to 500 km. These questions will have to be decided at negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons.

The three deputies allege further that at talks on strategic offensive weapons, the Soviet Union made "an obvious concession to the United States by agreeing with its demand for giving it the right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty."

It should be recalled that, like any other international agreement, the Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty stipulates the right of each party to withdraw from it by notifying the other party of its decision six months prior to withdrawal if extraordinary events related to the subject matter of the Treaty have jeopardized its "supreme interests." The Americans do not need our permission to withdrawal from the Treaty, and for this reason there are no grounds to talk about any concession on our part.

If Washington takes such a step, Moscow will equally have the right to withdraw not only from the ABM Treaty but also from

the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which will have a similar article on withdrawal. An early conclusion and ratification of the Treaty on a 50 percent reduction of offensive weapons will therefore be a real political guarantee against any undermining of the ABM Treaty. This is particularly true in the present situation, when in view of economic and technical problems, many people believe that the Strategic Defence Initiative is not a realistic proposition.

The three deputies complain that at the START negotiations, "the Soviet Foreign Ministry is making a concession to the United States by agreeing not to include sea-based cruise missiles, some 4,000 of which can be deployed in the near future." They also object to a reduction of Soviet heavy missiles "which serve as a deterrent to the Americans."

In fact, the parties are planning to set a ceiling of 880 nuclear cruise missiles, with equal rights for the Soviet Union and the United States. Moscow can also deploy without limitation cruise missiles with conventional warheads, which the deputies included in the figure of 4,000 mentioned in their article. These questions should be discussed at future talks on naval forces the road to which lies through implementation of the treaty on conventional forces in Europe.

As for heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), their reduction by half with a total reduction of strategic weapons by half is not only logical but also necessary for our security. A dangerous shift could appear in the Soviet triad of armaments without a proportionate reduction of heavy ICBMs: 3,000 warheads, or more than half of the permitted number (6,000) would be concentrated on only 300 heavy missiles which constitute less than 20 percent of carrier (1,600).

Instead of a "deterrent" they would become a tempting target for the Americans. The fact is that ICBM silos are now vulnerable to modern accurate and powerful warheads of MIRV missiles. By concentrating a large portion of warheads on heavy missiles, we would not be able to disperse our forces to a sufficient extent on more viable ground mobile launchers, submarines and bombers.

How to save money

The deputies calculated that expenditure involved in the scrapping of weapons and control over fulfilment of the treaty on a 50 percent reduction of strategic offensive arms will amount to 830 million rubles. Expenditure for similar purposes with respect to the treaty on conventional forces in Europe will make up 1,650 million rubles. These sums and expenditure on the INF Treaty, nuclear tests and the destruction of chemical weapons are expected to total 3,160 million rubles over 1991-95. It is not clear how these calculations had been made. It remains only to assume that the authors received them from authoritative military sources.

This is indeed a large sum. However, the deputies' conclusion that it was not expedient to sign these treaties "in conditions of perestroika and economic crisis" seems to be fallacious. In the present grave situation it would certainly be absurd to manufacture arms in large quantities, because later they will have to be eliminated in the same quantities. It will also be necessary to set equal levels between the two parties and prevent an arms buildup by the other party, for this would require counter-measures on our part, and so on.

If the three deputies are so concerned about the saving of public funds they will do well by raising the question of the growth of the 1991 military budget from 71 to 97 billion rubles. This growth can evidently be explained by arms purchases, not by concern for improving the living conditions of servicemen, in particular, providing housing for them.

The deputies complain in their article that "military cuts in the Soviet Union are effected quickly, whereas the US and NATO only plan them for the greater part." They sarcastically propose a unilateral disarmament of the USSR by the year 2000 to convince the world public of our "long-range peaceful intentions."

Is this an occasion for sarcasm? Indeed, in the past few years the Soviet Union had unilaterally cut several types of weapons from its armed forces. However, it considerably outnumbered the United States in all these weapons, and NATO as a whole in most of them. Even after the cuts the Soviet Union's armaments will not be below the level of the other party. Over the past few years, the United States has also unilaterally cut its armed forces and military budget several times over. Here is one of the many examples – the withdrawal of 2,500 tactical nuclear warheads in the 1980s. Recently the United States has given up over 20 new weapon systems and cut a number of programmes, including programmes for Stealth bombers and Trident submarines.

It should be kept in mind that while cutting some types of weapons we modernize most classes and types of armaments, and on a broader scale than prudent America. The point is that the Soviet public and the Soviet parliament are not yet informed of the costs of modernization.

No one proposes unilateral disarmament. The aim is to ensure real and openly grounded defence sufficiency. Far from contradicting this aim, the treaties on arms limitation and reduction help to achieve it. They enhance military stability and predictability at mutually reduced levels of the strategic balance on a global and regional scale. The treaties also help to cut down wasteful expenditure on the rivalry and concentrate on the quality of defence (including the quality of the life of servicemen), the dependability of military equipment, and the combat readiness of the armed forces.

The concept underlying the critical research done by the three deputies is disquieting. The security of the Union, they argue, can be ensured only if its armed forces are not inferior to the total armed forces of all probable enemies. Among them number the United States, European countries and NATO, China, Japan and other countries. If we try to oppose all major countries "as potential adversaries," they will inevitably become our real enemies. They will rally and build up their armed forces. Not only the USSR, now in a deep crisis, but also no other power could endure such confrontation. We tried this in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. It meant a colossal expenditure for the Soviet state and turned it into "Upper Volta with missiles," as one of the three deputies, Col. Alksnis, put it.

The aim of new political thinking proclaimed in the mid-1980s is to get out of the vicious circle, to cut the endless spiral of the growth of military confrontation. Over the past five years Soviet policy has achieved considerable successes in this way. Thanks to major political decisions, treaties and unilateral measures for partial arms reduction, the Soviet Union's security has not weakened but substantially increased in the strategic respect. The main danger is now posed not by military threats from without, all the more so as we remain ahead of any other power in most types of weapons the real danger comes from the break-up of our economy still overburdened with huge military expenditure, acute national, social and political problems, that is, from the spheres in which perestroika has not unfortunately brought about good results. If we "beg for charity" from other countries, as the three deputies write, this happened precisely as a result of the old approach to the provision of national security, not because the Soviet Union has fewer missiles now.

The USSR will be able to overcome its crisis and restore its great-power status on an entirely new basis only thanks to the continuity of its foreign policy along with implementation of urgent radical domestic reforms.

Murder will out

The conference participants had their second meeting in the Receptions House in the Vorobyovy Hills, Moscow, on August 25, 1968. The meeting lasted from 5.00 to 6.30 p.m.

Brezhnev was absent from the meeting, with the Soviet side represented by Comrades Kosygin, Podgorny and Katushev.

Kosygin. May we inform you about developments so far. We have drawn up, on behalf of the CPSU, a draft protocol which could be signed along with the Czechoslovak delegation. It deals with the problems we discussed yesterday. We have not handed it over to the delegation formally, but Bilak knows the text well. I shall now read it to you (text taken down verbatim as Kosygin delivered it):

DRAFT PROTOCOL

1. Delegations from the CPSU and the CPCz held talks in Moscow on August 23–25, 1968. The talks centered on the problems connected with the protection of the socialist achievements of the Czechoslovak people.

Both sides proceeded from generally accepted principles underlying relations between fraternal countries and parties and in accordance with the understandings reached in Cierna and Bratislava. The need for the protection of the achievements was confirmed as well as for a resolute struggle against all anti-socialist forces, which is a duty of all the Communist Parties. The negotiators voiced their conviction that it was necessary to realize the principles spelled out in Bratislava and also what had been agreed upon in Cierna, and to carry out the measures outlined there.

2. The CPCz delegation stated that the so-called 14th CPCz Congress was invalid, and made all the resolutions null and void, on the grounds that the Congress had been convened in violation of the Rules, without delegates from the Communist Party of Slovakia, from the army, etc., having been invited. The congress was a political provocation. The CPCz said the 14th Congress would be called after the situation in the party and in the country was brought back to normal.

3. The CPCz delegation informed us that in two or three days from now the CPCz Central Committee would gather in plenary session, with members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia and of the Central Auditing Commission in attendance.

The plenary session will discuss pressing problems connected with the situation in Czechoslovakia, the ways to rectify the situation in the country, economic affairs, and so on.

It will emphasize the need to strengthen all the echelons of party leadership in the country and to relieve from their posts party executives who fail to maintain the leading role of the working class and the party, to uphold the interests of socialism and to keep up close ties with fraternal socialist countries.

4. The CPCz leaders declared taking without delay, a number of measures aimed at strengthening the rule of workers and peasants and consolidating socialism.

They stressed the need for:

August 1968. Prague

How coups are staged. August 1968: a look behind the scenes

Conclusion. For beginning, see *New Times* No. 8, 1991

– gaining full control over the mass media;

– countering anti-socialist and anti-Soviet actions;

– neutralizing various groups and organizations holding anti-socialist positions;

– preventing the formation of the social-democratic party.

As part of this effort, measures will be taken to purge the party and the government of persons who have compromised themselves and whose activity does not serve the interests of the party and socialism. CPSU leaders voiced their solidarity with that principled stand.

5. The CPSU and CPCz representatives reached an understanding as regards the stay of the five allied countries' troops on Czechoslovak territory. The troops will not interfere in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs. As soon as the threat to the achievements of socialism in Czechoslovakia and to the security of the socialist countries is removed, the allied troops will be gradually withdrawn from Czechoslovakia.

6. The Czechoslovak leaders have informed us that the Czechoslovak armed forces will be issued instructions aimed at preventing incidents and conflicts with allied troops. The army command has been instructed to maintain contacts with the command of the allied troops. The Presidium of the CPCz Central Committee and the government of Czechoslovakia are to take measures to prevent actions which may cause friction between the local population and the allied troops.

7. An agreement has been reached to the effect that negotiations on a broad range of economic problems are to begin soon with a view to deepening economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the USSR and the Czechoslovakia as part of promoting the development of Czechoslovakia along socialist lines.

8. The sides see eye to eye on the fact that considering the current international situation and the line of action taken by imperialism, it is necessary to enhance the efficacy of the Warsaw Treaty and other bi- and multilateral treaties.

9. CPSU and CPCz representatives have reaffirmed their determination to continue coordinating the efforts of the USSR and the Czechoslovakia in the international arena, to pursue in European affairs, as ever, a policy which accords with the common interests of all socialist states, safeguards peace in Europe, the policy of resistance to militarist, revanchist and neo-fascist forces which seek to revise the results of World War II, and redraw the present frontiers.

Both sides will carry out all the commitments ensuing from bi- or multilateral agreements. They will oppose imperialism all down the line.

10. In connection with the discussion of the so-called Czechoslovak problem in the United Nations, the CPCz representatives said that the Czechoslovak side had not submitted this problem to the UN and objected to groundless interference in its internal affairs. The CPCz representatives are going to have the Czechoslovak government instruct its ambassador to the UN to lodge a vigorous protest against the discussion of this problem in the UN.

11. The Czechoslovak representatives said they condemned the activities of Ota Sik and Jiri Hajek* who had usurped the right to speak for the Czechoslovak government. Such activities are incompatible with their further membership in the government.

12. Both sides discussed problems pertaining to an exchange of party and government delegations aimed at the further strengthening of friendship, and at seeking joint solutions to problems now faced.

13. The delegations have agreed that all the particulars of their meetings, beginning with August 20, should be regarded as strictly confidential. The CPCz representatives informed the CPSU and the Soviet government that Pavel** would be relieved of all posts for his counterrevolutionary activity.

14. The representatives of both sides solemnly proclaim that the CPSU, the CPCz and the two governments will make every effort to further their traditional and historical friendship in the spirit of the slogan "Together forever" and that, at the same time, they will seek to deepen their friendship within the framework of the entire socialist community.

We should like the Czechoslovak delegation to draw up, on the basis of this protocol, a document of its own which is to include all the above provisions plus specific

*Sik – the prominent economist, then deputy chairman of the Czechoslovak government; Hajek – Minister of Foreign Affairs (Ed.).

**Pavel – in 1968, Minister of the Interior (Ed.).

Kosygin:

We want this protocol to be a document submitted by the Czechoslovak delegation, not by us

Czech problems such as that of terminating the activity of KAN, K-231 (mistyped 203 in the original) and other hostile groups, introducing censorship, etc. Now the delegation is busy drawing up its own draft protocol with Bilak, who has our text, taking part.

We have suggested three optional solutions to the problem:

I. To form a revolutionary government or a state-of-war government headed by President Svoboda who, besides that, would also assume the functions of the chairman of the government. Svoboda has declined the offer.

II. Cernik will be First Secretary of the Central Committee, and Husak – Chairman of the government. This question was discussed with Svoboda and Bilak who doubted the possibility of such an arrangement under the given circumstances. If Dubcek conducts a plenary session which pronounces the congress invalid, his prestige will decline, and then it will be possible to make changes. Dubcek has a heart trouble. Czech doctors have examined him and found his illness to be nothing serious (hypertension and so forth).

III. The third option is to be found in the draft protocol.

At 20.00, the Czechoslovak side should be ready for negotiations with us and submit its proposals. If their proposals lack any of the points found in ours, we shall insist on these points being included in them.

Podgorny. Bilak has our proposals, but we want him to tell the delegation that these proposals are his.

Kosygin. We want the protocol to be a document proposed by the delegation, not by us.

Svoboda knows our position and backs it. He told us that in his opinion Dubcek had to be relieved, that Dubcek is too sensitive a man, that he, Svoboda, did not trust him and found it difficult to work with him. Svoboda will do all he can to remove him. If he returns home without Dubcek, however, Dubcek will become a hero, but it will be different if he brings Dubcek along.

The delegation now includes all the members of the Presidium, Lenart and Barbirek included, who have come over from Prague, leaving only Kolder and Sadovsky behind. If they accept our proposals, this will provide the basis for solving the problem. It will be possible to form a new government within two or three days of the plenary session's closing day.

Podgorny. We should like the Presidium to include Svoboda and Husak who behave the best here.

Svoboda wants to return to Prague tomorrow or even tonight. He wants to arrive there unnoticed lest any unnecessary demonstrations should take place. The communiqué will be published only after his arrival, whereupon he will speak in the Hrad. Cernik is also to make a speech. They are to prepare the texts of their statements and show them to us.

Kosygin. Svoboda asks to take all those present, including Kriegel who alone does not take part in the delegation's work, along to Prague. He fears lest Kriegel should be looked upon as a hero if we hold him here. The question hasn't been settled and is still to be discussed by the Politburo.

Gomulka. This is not much of a problem; it hardly makes any difference.

Kosygin. I have submitted my ideas to you, but it is hard to say to what an extent they can be realized.

In the discussion that followed, **Gomulka** said that the troops issue was the most important one. For all the importance of the other provisions, some of them could be probably dropped if the matter of the Czechoslovak leadership's consent to the stay of the troops in the country is spelled out distinctly. Accordingly, he suggested that Paragraph 5 of the Protocol be duly enlarged. A relevant intergovernmental agreement should be negotiated. As an option he suggested that some Czechoslovak divisions be deployed on the territories of our countries as part of strengthening friendly ties between them.

Kosygin and Podgorny explained that the Czechoslovak side would not agree to that. While in Moscow, they will not sign anything amounting to a consent to a permanent stay of troops – after all, our statement says they will remain there only temporarily.

Gomulka. If the troops issue is resolved, then concessions could be made, such as the withdrawal of the troops from towns.

The protocol should also provide guarantees, by the Czechoslovak side, against the left-wing forces' representatives undergoing repressions en route through the territory of the country.

Kosygin said that a corps of railway troops had been sent to Czechoslovakia earlier that day in order the guarantee safety of transportation.

A discussion of the proposal that the

Podgorny:

We expect the Czechoslovak representatives to write their statements and show them to us

protocol should be regarded as a confidential document followed. **Gomulka** and **Ulbricht** voiced their doubts in this connection. Ulbricht said that Czechoslovak representatives had already failed to fulfil one confidential agreement – that reached in Cierna. Therefore, they are not to be trusted in this case, either. They will keep the West informed about the progress of the negotiations one-sided anyway, and we shall be compelled as to publish the protocol.

Kosygin and Podgorny said that if the Czechs failed to fulfil the provisions of the protocol, we should publish it ourselves. The protocol would be signed by the whole delegation, but its publication in Moscow is out of the question because after the protocol is made public the delegation will be in no position to return to Prague. They want to bring these questions before the plenary session of the CPCz Central Committee on their own behalf.

Gomulka. We can't look at it this way. Theirs is a legal government which has the right to undertake commitments and to demand popular support for the decisions it makes.

Kosygin. Tell that to the 16 million Czechoslovaks, not to me!

Gomulka and Podgorny gave conflicting accounts of the meeting at the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior.

(P. 22 of the original is missing.)

The third meeting

The third meeting took place in the Reception House on August 26–27, at 23.45 – 01.00 hours.

Present at the meeting were the participants of the previous meetings, the USSR was represented by Comrades Brezhnev, Podgorny and Kosygin.

Brezhnev informed the meeting that both sides had signed the protocol on the negotiations between Soviet representatives and the Czechoslovak delegation. In the concluding phase of the talks, all representatives of the Czechoslovak leadership had taken part in preparations except Kapek, who was not available for Moscow talks at the time and, therefore, had not come over

Gomulka:

The Czechoslovak leadership's consent to the stay of our troops ought to be worded in no uncertain terms

from Czechoslovakia, and Kriegel, who was in Moscow but refused to take part in the negotiations. The protocol was signed by 21 members of the Czechoslovak delegation headed by President Svoboda. On the whole, it is identical, apart from a few minor differences, to the Moscow draft discussed at the meeting of the "five" yesterday. It was decided to regard the protocol as a confidential document. (Each delegation received a copy.)

The delegation accepted the Soviet draft communiqué of the negotiations; the communiqué was also signed by the members of both delegations, who decided that it would be published on August 27 at 14.00 hours European Mean Time.

Brezhnev informed those present that the Czechoslovak delegation was returning to Prague that same day in full and was expected to act there in the spirit of the agreements reached.

In conclusion of the talks both delegations parted cordially. President Svoboda said that a great job had been done and voiced his confidence that Soviet comrades would give them a hand. In reply, Brezhnev assured him that the Soviet side would honestly carry out the commitments ensuing from the protocol.

Podgorny pointed out that President Svoboda had taken an extremely positive position at the negotiations. All of a sudden he asked, sharply, whether the Czechoslovak delegation wanted bloodshed.

In conclusion, an agreement was reached to the effect that a communiqué would be drawn up on negotiations of the "five." The text of a statement for the press was edited, with Kosygin taking part. It was decided that the statement would see the light right after the publication of the communiqué on the Soviet-Czechoslovak negotiations.

The meeting ended with a joint supper.

The protocol has been drawn up by Trepczynski.

The Polish delegation at the meeting included Rychlowski, an interpreter.

Done in five copies.

Tanks and culture

By way of an epilogue to the protocols which have ceased to be secret

The last Soviet tanks are pulling out of Czecho-Slovakia. Needless to say, they were sent there in 1968; therefore, the less attractive pages in our relationships are associated with tanks here. The very pages which, as we see from these protocols now made public, were written in Moscow with such a cynical bluntness. One could explain to the local people a hundred times that the tracks of those tanks out of the year 1968 have not rumbled over the city street here alone but ridden roughshod over our very lives, too, that they have run over not only "Prague Spring" but "Moscow Thaw" as well. The explanations will sound hollow because the voice of emotions is often louder than the voice of reason. It is only a complete withdrawal of troops, many observers say here, that will open a new era in our interrelationships.

The tanks are rolling – this time from West to East. Let us say goodbye to them, subdue our emotions and look at the strictly scientific conclusions drawn by the two countries' historians now busy filling in the gaps in our knowledge of that period. The prospect of a farewell to tanks is not equally welcome to all. "Previously, we sold our resources to the West cheap... Now we are selling out our strategic interests. In both cases, this amounts to selling our own future." Some of our members of parliament may well subscribe to these words by a participant of the round-table discussion the *Druzhba Narodov* (International Friendship) magazine has arranged recently. The view – expressed by the protocols so explicitly – that international friendship is guaranteed by tanks alone is, unfortunately, very tenacious of life... Our own "hawks" do not seem to realize how encouraging their screams are to the "birds of a feather" found in Czecho-Slovakia. Quite recently, the following statement was made in the CSFR parliament: considering that Prague had allegedly "not been liberated by the Sovet Army, the dubious monument – the tank in Smichov, tarnished by the events of 1968, ought to be dismantled." There are, indeed, gaps in our knowledge of what happened in the remote year of 1945, but why turn them into "black holes"? There is no denying the fact that the people of Prague themselves decided to erect this monument in commemoration of the first tank which had broken into the city and was put out of action by an enemy shell on May 9.

As I roamed around the tank in Smichov the other day I thought about the "strange coincidences" the poet wrote about: the tank stands right at the food of Petrin Hill. Marina Tsvetayeva had often climbed to its top which commanded an almost bird's eye view of the city all the way to the horizon, where the heavens touched the earth. The hill inspired her to write her famous *Poem of the Mountain*. "The mountain was under the spell of an oath no one can break..." Who knows how many oaths of loyalty and love our boys heard here in 1945? Many never lived to hear those oaths – 140,000 liberators lie buried in Czecho-Slovakia. An inscription etched into the monument next to the names of the dead says: "We want no freedom from Asians." What a moral mix-up! And what a chauvinistic contempt for the peoples – not only Soviet – which constitute a half of mankind.

The snow at the foot of the monument is strewn with fresh flowers. The decision of the Smichov municipality to put the monument up for a public sale ("shopkeepers will digest their profits at leisure," Marina Tsvetayeva wrote about her Mountain, as if in anticipation of things to come) revolted many Prague residents including those whom the year 1968 had thrown into nonexistence for decades. Culture must resist mob rule in every way in order to survive. Now the fate of the monument depends on the Ministry of Culture; hopefully, men of culture are to be found there.

One of the participants of the meeting of the "Warsaw Five" used the word "sensitive" – as an invective. I am not much of a historian, mind you, and much less of a politician; therefore, what amazed me most about those politician/traders was the way they had categorized people: "positive," "negative" – meaning something exactly opposite to what these adjectives normally signify! Utter moral confusion! As if heads of state go by moral criteria different from those ordinary people go by. But the whole trouble was that secret protocols caused overt moral deformation in many, the ordinary people included. This explains, perhaps, why some public speakers unashamedly admit to being "hawks" for all the world to hear. Aren't those protocols behind the efforts now being made by perfectly decent people, as well as hawks, to tarnish the monument – and memory – today?

Decent people are not necessarily civilized people. But there certainly are civilized people among them. Thousands of Prague residents signed a petition of protest. Upon learning from an evening paper that the district authorities had all but decided to auction the Smichov tank off, Vladimir Remek – an army officer, the first cosmonaut – volunteered, on the following day, to take it to the military museum where he works. The Defence Minister and the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and the President of the country spoke out against the monument's being torn down. It seems that from the height of a space trajectory, of the mountain top, a government post – or mere moral integrity – one can get a better view of our sinful world beset with all sorts of extremes, and the horizon which is not only the line at which the earth and sky meet, but also the line which delimits the scope for human understanding.

Despite the fact that the Smichov municipality turns a deaf ear to voices of protest, the first tank, even if torn down, will remain forever. In the meantime, the last tanks are leaving. Let us say goodbye to them, with a sense of relief and with a hope for the best.

Inna Rudenko,
our own correspondent

PRAGUE

ESSAY

Are Gods mortal?

Rereading Feofan Prokopovich

Vladimir Razuvayev

No nation can be robbed of its right to social choice. It can only be told that it has no free choice

To say that political revolutions are attended by gunfire and the eclat or damnation of the mob is wrong. Only coups occur overnight. Revolutions take years, even decades, to accomplish, which simply physically dissuades applause.

Within a temporal context ideological revolutions are as long as political revolutions. The only difference is that ideas unlike political institutions take longer to root themselves in society. Which perhaps may be why the process is less noticeable to the contemporary and in the historical perspective.

Divine volition

By its very nature, what happened in Russia in the second half of the 17th century and early 18th century was an ideological revolution. The previously prevalent thesis of Church above King was renounced. The tsar not Patriarch was God's top Orthodox legate in this Orthodox land. The Church, hitherto Russia's relatively independent social institution, was directly subordinated to the state.

Simultaneously formulated were the ideas that were to define coming centuries of Russia's political development. Basic was a sophisticated outline explaining the origins of government. The credit for the theory of the enlightened Russian absolute state goes to Feofan Prokopovich, Russia's first emperor's loyal associate, friend and confidant. Proceeding from the Bible and natural right, he maintained that the instinctive urge of people, at one time living "freely," to preserve life in common led to the creation of a state. Society chose the type of state it wanted. Popular volition caused the absolute monarchy to emerge in Russia. Yet, the people were deprived of a free choice, being motivated solely by divine volition.

According to foreigners visiting 17th-century Muscovy, the tradition of identifying mundane authority with divine power was long practised in Russia. Thus, in his "Foreigners about Muscovy" Vasily Klyuchevsky noted the astonishment felt at the "pious humility" entertained for Muscovy's ruler by his subjects. "Listening to Muscovite envoys, the Archbishop of Vienna was delighted with such obedience to the ruler 'as to God.' No subject, however high his rank, dared to contradict or disagree with the ruler: his subjects frankly admit that the ruler's will is God's will, that the ruler is the executor of God's will."

However, Russians' attitude to the tsar, which so greatly amazed the foreigner was personalized. What Feofan Prokopovich effected in collaboration with other Russian ideologues spelled sanctification of the origins of the monarchy, not of one or another ruler.

Sociologists of the period demonstrated two approaches to the relationship between nation and ruler. According to Thomas Hobbes, commitments were one-sided, according to Samuel von Pufendorf, two-sided. Prokopovich was familiar with the writings of both and could consequently choose. He preferred Hobbes. Hence the transfer of popular volition to monarch is final, even should the monarch renege on his commitments to care for justice, law and order at home, education, peace, defence against foreign enemies and "popular welfare," implying the national economy.

One feels bound to add that according to Hobbes, a monarch's absolute sway over his subjects, with the exception of the right to their lives, was in practice constrained not only by the principle of government's designation to the effect that the common weal represented the supreme law for the state, but also by the acknowledgement that the people were the final source of power. Thus, according to Hobbes, the people rule everywhere and, in case of a monarchy, manifest their will through the will of one man, which means that under the monarchy the king is the people."

However, Prokopovich has not even a whisper of such duality. In his eyes the people have no sovereignty, moreover, they are regarded as nothing but obedient subjects. His

Drawing by Victor Kazachek

ideas of the origin of power precluded every argument as to the popular attitude towards a change of regime. On the other hand, Hobbes, who in practice proceeds from reason and ignores a religious interpretation of social phenomena, maintains that the individual's duties to authority remain only as long as such authority continues. Once overthrown, such authority may no longer count on the loyalty of its former subjects.

Fairy tales and theomachists

As the years rolled by, Russia's literary language modified. Special philological grounding was needed to decipher Feofan Prokopovich's writings. The political vocabulary also changed. The state now encased directives issued to society and substantiated its right to existence as an autocracy by means of other words and concepts. Yet, the ideas were still those which Feofan Prokopovich proclaimed, to wit: the people had delegated authority to the Russian emperor by divine volition and hence none could question that choice.

Today there is no point in debating the extent to which the so-called "tsarist illusions" were due to the national character, or to the political culture, or simply to historical or even popular inertia. The important thing is that they actually existed and that Russia, no matter how hard liberals or revolutionaries sought to question it, believed in the divine origin of the monarchy. The popular spirit is reflected in fairy tales, wherein adroit Russian peasants suceed in duping not only priests and boyars, but even tsars. The authors of these fairy tales even have the "simpleton Ivans" mount the royal throne. One could take issue with the tsar and rebel, and not only in word – according to Marquis de Custine's apt remarks, "In Russia the rebel soldier is freest of all." The only thing they could not do was question the origin of monarchic rule. This, not the pitiful several score political police agents imparted stability to authority.

Hence, anyone challenging the power of the tsar was seen as a theomachist by the populace. The Russian has always had a rather complex relationship with God. His insuperably Orthodox bias, about which so much has been written and continues to be written, existed only in his own mind. The immense number of churches sooner revealed the motivations of local government than the inclinations of the congregation. But despite sceptical scoffing of official Orthodoxy, to which the virtually unhampered ransacking of churches and monasteries and as unhampered harassment of priests under Soviet power bear witness, the Russian's piety can scarcely be questioned. Consequently, the political theomachists were regarded with restraint to say the least. Extreme conditions were needed for this historical inertia to be overcome. However, the inertia boomeranged, with the so-called theomachists transformed into the loyal servants and executors of the Divine will.

To secure this, the niche God occupied in the popular mind had to be supplanted by something or somebody else. Though under Lenin the process had only just got off to a start, the scheme was at once thrown into relief. This implied a ruthless drive against the old world outlook, up to the bodily extermination of its carriers and especially creators, to wit the intellectuals; a monovalent assessment of the October revolt as assertion of the rightness of the Marxist version of the laws of social evolution and, finally, the entrenchment in the mass mentality of the rudiments of the Marxist sociological pattern.

In the final analysis, the no-alternative option in the ideological realm secured success to the Bolsheviks. The popular mentality tacitly acknowledged as de-

miurge a history reduced to a mere five phases of formation that was hence understandable even to an infant.

The right of choice

The consequences were stupendous. If socialism was inevitable in the historical evolution of the human race, as the October Revolution demonstrated, then the type of regime appeared to be ordained from above, that is by history with its immutable laws. The socialist revolution did not abolish Prokopovich's scheme, but merely rewrote it in the new words and spelling. The theorists of the new world outlook stressed that it was the people of the Russian empire who had chosen socialism. However, the logic of historical materialism which they asserted simultaneously proceeded from the premise that the popular right of choice was merely an apparent one as the choice had been predetermined by the laws of social evolution.

Such was the way of things in this rigid sociological pattern. Yet even under Lenin the natural urge to make the doctrine somewhat more subtle so as not to be bored to death by endless discussion, plus quite understandable human foibles, resulted in the theory of the subjective factor in revolution (though not in social evolution). As irony of fate would have it, atheistic Marxism produced something reminiscent of the well-known theological thesis as to the freedom of violition, in which, though God determined everything in advance, man was still free in his choice of alternative conduct or rather, reduced to the nitty-gritty, had to reaffirm the rightness of God by his personal choice. Hence, though history's laws had caused a revolution in Russia, it was impossible to dispense with Lenin or later with Lenin – Stalin. God had his prophets invested, naturally, with very special traits.

"Can we also really say of Lenin a 'leader by grace of God'?" Vladimir Mayakovsky asks. At first he angrily denounces this blasphemous thought but subsequently reaffirms it according to "the canons of Marxism." "Earthly yes," the poet says, "but not the grovelling kind who'll never peer beyond the precincts of their sty. He took in all the planet at a time, saw things out of reach for the common eye."

However great the role prophets play, that is nought when faced with history's divine will. Social laws determine the behaviour of the masses, divided into classes, guided by political parties with leaders at the head. Such is the pattern according to the proletariat's chief leader. Completely vulgarizing the already simplified Marxist-Leninist sociological pattern, Mayakovsky even produces a new genealogical tree for his central character. "Capital, a very hedgehog for contradictions, bristling with bayonets, waxed fat and strong. The spectre of Communism haunted Europe, withdrew, then roamed again throughout its girth. For all these reasons in Simbirsk, half-way from Moscow to the Urals, Lenin, a boy like any other, came to birth."

Though one may heatedly debate at length the emphasis and place of the subjective factor in Marxist sociology, whatever conclusions one draws, one cannot deny the basic point which is that in Soviet political mentality the October revolt and choice of socialism entrenched themselves as historically determined phenomena. Hence, and not of popular volition, is legitimization of the existing regime, which was several times more stable than the legitimacy a democratic system might secure.

The years of social and political crisis have undercut the prestige of the founding fathers of the socialist state, of the ruling party and its leaders. Still the regime continues, whatever blunders the government and its agents might commit. Who would dare to say that the ideological basis under the legitimacy of the socialist system is gone? All public opinion polls show that popular belief (and it is **belief** indeed) in the lawfulness of the October revolt continues. It would indeed be hard to expect any other result, when all voicing alternative views restrict involvement in the public debate to the effort to make known the information concerning wholesale reprisals and their considerations as to the negative conduct of one or another leader of the October revolution. Essentially speaking, there has been no encroachment as yet on the prestige of the Marxist "five phases." The ousting from the mass mentality of the divine Marxist "social predetermination" and assertion of the idea of the popular right to free social choice which is so essential for successful democratization is yet to be. However, Nietzsche did say, didn't he, that Gods are mortal.

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I'm scared, fellow-citizens...

Tatiana Ivanova

What if the last bulb in my apartment burns out? Although, serious enough, this is by no means the deepest of my worries...

My house chores have now come to include seeing to it that no lights in the apartment burn idly. "For God's sake, will you ever learn to put that bulb out when you no longer need it?", I keep nagging at my son. "I've done that forty times for you tonight! Just get this: electric bulbs are nowhere to be bought, and after the last one burns out we'll plunge into darkness. Understand?"

My son gives me a pitying glance. "Mom, do you realize that if you turn that switch on and off forty times a night it may break down? Is a bulb of any use without a switch?"

Let nobody fool oneself that adult life is beyond children's understanding – more often than not our kids understand surprisingly much... To switch off or not to switch off – that is the question. Which of the coming disasters is worse – a bulb burn-out or a switch break-down? Whatever questions mankind has asked itself over the ages pale by the side of this one. I mean questions like "What's my aim in life?" "Is there life on Mars?" "Is there love at first sight?" "To be or not to be?" As a poet aptly put it, "A pinching shoe is worse than Goethe's eeriest fantasies."

In my dreams, I sometimes take the floor at a Supreme Soviet session and say: "Ladies and gentlemen, what am I to do if my last electric bulb burns out? Thank you, I've got no more questions to ask you."

The most awful thing is that no one in my family can steal. The elders are too old to learn the craft – even if they venture on a "job," they will die of fear in the attempt. I may, of course, encourage the kid to do that, but what if he is caught? That will ruin his life. The obvious conclusion is that I am the one to learn stealing. I shall drop in one of my favourite editorial offices... Subside into an armchair, cross my legs... Discuss politics with my host... Then tell him I'm out of sorts and ask for a glass of tap water. While he is away, I make a dash for his desk, screw the bulb out, slip it into my bag, then return to the armchair and cross my legs. What if someone catches me red-handed? Oh, I'll think up something all right!

So far so good. This is a good plan as far as a bulb is concerned. But what if my fridge gets out of order?

"I've bought myself a white and blue thing! A glittering one!" my best girl friend yells on the phone.

"What is it?" I ask. "A dress?"

"Oh, no, it's quite narrow."

"A trimming or something?"

"It might be, for all I know... Not for a dress, though. It's rather thick, you know, looks like plastic. I've bought ten metres of it, they allowed only ten metres per person."

"What is it, Sveta?"

"No idea, but it's beautiful, glittering, white on the one side and navy blue on the other. I'll bring it along and you'll see. I'm sure I'll find a use for it. It sold like hot cakes. The queue was a mile long."

This is the way we shop today. "We are closing," a salesgirl shouts. "Anybody willing to buy by the crateload?" The shoppers rush for her: "I am! We are! Give it to me!" It makes no difference to anyone what the crate contains: noodles, tins, cereals, condenced milk, soap... "It'll be 57 rubles!" the salesgirl announces at the top of her voice. The hieroglyphic crate turns out to be a heavy one – 25 kilos net – and we have to lay out all our strength to carry it to the office. Opened in a hurry, it reveals a chunk of Chinese beef. We transfer it to the floor, fetch an axe from a store next door, and start dividing it among us. We feel rather awkward about it – but then, isn't it common practice now to pool rations and then to redistribute them according to priority ("X got the butter last month, so now it's Y's turn").

... Suddenly, I forget all my gnawing fears. To hell with the bulbs, the fridge, the eternal shortages. What I see on the silver screen for just thirty seconds, as part of the Vremya programme, ousts everything else from the forefront of my mind.

I see Vladimir Ivashko, Deputy General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, being shown around an industrial plant in Minsk. He wears a magnificent fur hat – it must be too cold inside for him to take the thing off. The fur shimmers expensively in a flood–lit factory shop, set off to the best advantage against the background of padded jackets and women's grey headscarves – the drab "uniform" of our working class.

Ivashko is explaining something to his escorts. I recall Yegor Kuzmich Ligachev doing the same on such occasions. Engineers, technologists and designers are all ears – they are accustomed to listening to the bosses with a concentrated expression on their faces. Who of us does not remember televized scenes of choreographers and geneticists, preschool teachers and sugar-beet growers, veterinary surgeons and electronics experts harking to the CPSU leaders with rapt attention? After all, the voice of the Party leader is the voice of the State itself.

Then I hear No. 2 man in the Party saying: "We shall keep the Union at any cost."

What price is Comrade Ivashko prepared to pay for that? His own life, perhaps? Well, anyone is one's own life, perhaps? Well, anyone is one's own master. Only I am not so sure he is really prepared to sacrifice his life to this cause...

People have nothing, except young lives, to pay for the die-hards' ideas, ambitions and mistakes in. All the leaders of the Lithuanian Communist Party standing on the platform of the CPSU are very much alive. They haven't even thought of sacrificing their own lives. They preferred to sacrifice others'.

I'm scared, fellow-citizens...

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Big ear of a big friend

The investigation into the scandal on Krasnaya Presnya continues. We are unlikely to be able to find out whose conversations are bugged in our country, so we turn to the lessons learned by other countries...

Nikita Zholkver,
New Times correspondent

That their telephone conversations were listened to, East and West Germans have known for some time. However the scale of spying activities and population control practiced by the erstwhile "first workers' and peasants' state on German soil" is coming to light only now. It will take legal scholars and historians of the FRG years to sort through all the material left by Stasi, the Ministry of State Security of the former GDR whose activities one must assume did not differ much from those of their counterparts in other East European countries, including the Soviet Union.

From that portion of the Stasi archives which has been published and analyzed one must conclude that virtually the entire GDR and much of the FRG came under the close surveillance of the Ministry for State Security, a system of totalitarian control which was Prussian-like in its extreme efficiency. The reports authored by state committees engaged in disbanding the GDR's security apparat attest that Stasi stored in electronic files compromising material on five million residents of the GDR, that is every third person in the country, from the tiniest infant to the most senior citizen. Information was obtained in the most illegal methods. In some East German cities every incoming and outgoing letter was opened and read and every other phone call was monitored by Stasi.

Letters were the responsibility of Department "M" run by Colonel Strobel. He and thousands of his underlings worked from dawn to dusk steam-opening letters, making notes on their content, compiling files on senders and recipients and resealing and sending them out again. Telephone conversations were dutifully monitored by Department "26", headed by Major General Leber and the Third Main Directorate run by Major General Männchen. Listening in on telephone conversations of East German citizens was no problem for the state security agency, which had special listening apparatus spread out across the whole country. The telephone numbers of suspicious persons, which included members of the opposition and dissidents, were stored in computers automatically activating tape recorders which were turned on whenever their phone rang or its receiver was picked up.

Special attention was given to calls made to and from other countries, especially the FRG. A call received from the West, even if a wrong number, could prove to have grave consequences for an East German citizen and could leave black mark on his or her computer file and thereby forever preventing him or her from receiving permission to travel abroad. No did any of this required any special electronic apparatus. No state telephone worker would ever think of opposing a security officer's wish to be plugged into a telephone line.

Listening in on conversations between people in other countries, though, was another matter. However, no effort was too expensive for the East German government and special antennas were erected along the entire East-West German border, from Bahrendorf on the Baltic Sea to the Czech town of Ceske Budejovice: antennas which were tuned to the frequencies of the West German radio relay system serving as the telephone link for almost half of all city-to-city phone calls in the FRG. This giant ear was serviced by six million electronic engineers who, in the opinion of experts, listened in on some 400 thousand West Germans' phone conversations every year. Some 2000 tape recorders recorded the conversations, and 25 thousand phones in West Germany were automatically monitored by East German computers.

In addition to all this, Stasi rigged special devices which allowed them to eavesdrop on the conversations conducted by 200 thousand mobile car telephones in West Germany. Special antennas for these purposes were erected on the rooves of diplomatic and trade branches of the GDR located in Bonn and Düsseldorf. For special eavesdropping missions, lorries of the East German firm Deutrans were sent up and down the autobahns of West Germany, their cabs equipped with highly-sensitive

microphones, tape recorders and radio-direction finders.

This "electronic ear" of the Ministry of State Security served a wide variety of purposes. For example, the head of Stasi, Erich Mielke once ordered eavesdropping on the conversations of members of the Werder Bremen football team which was to play a match against his favorite, Berlin's Dynamo in the World Cup. Stasi agents worked with expertise and finesse and Mielke was able to give his team's trainer a thick file analyzing the strong and weak points of each and every player of the West German team. However, the agencies' work did not have the desired result and the West German team won the match 5 to 0.

It should be mentioned that Stasi work in the FRG was not unique. Similar activities and methods form part of the espionage arsenal of the US National Security Agency, the most secret of all the world's secret services. Not far from Braunschweig in Bad-Aibling, on Berlin's Devil's Mountain and in several other West German cities, the NSA has erected listening antennas which allow them to eavesdrop on conversations not only in the FRG but all over the globe. The big ear of a big friend is tuned to everything everywhere.

From time to time the headquarters of German security and the Department for the Protection of the Constitution receive information gathered by the Americans relating to the activities of terrorist and extremist groups and foreign citizens living in the FRG. Such data never contain direct refernces to overheard telephone conversations, but the accompanying stamp "absolutely reliable source" testifies to the actual origin of the information.

Day and night, complex arrays of electronic apparatus monitor the airwaves above the FRG. Programmed telephone numbers allow picking out a single line out of a mass of tens of thousands and automatic devices instantly react to specific topics of telephone conversation. As soon as such devices hear words such as "bomb", "chancellor" or "White House," the tape recorders are automatically turned on.

The NSA operates in the FRG as it always has. According to reports published in the magazine *Der Spiegel*, an American listening station which eavesdrops on the conversations of German citizens is located in Frankfurt-am-Main, the telephone and radio relay juncture of the FRG. Earlier NSA experts were housed atop the main post office, then relocated to the roof of the Woolworth department store and now are housed in the building located at No. 6, Am Hauptbahnhof Strasse. After each move, the German postal service was forced to relay hundreds of telephone wires housed in protective pipes. The purpose of this relaying was quite naturally unknown to workers of the phone service, but one of technician, who happened to take a peek inside one of the protection buildings, tells of hundreds of tape recorders lined in neat rows.

And what about the West German authorities themselves – the police and secret services? West German law strictly regulates in what cases freedom of privacy in correspondence and telephone conversations may be violated. Current debates in the FRG about the illegal sale of arms to Iraq by German firms point up that such government organs often have their hands tied. The police, for instance, may not receive the court's permission to engage in surveillance of persons suspected of a crime unless they first produce convincing evidence that a crime has been or is about to be committed. And the use of spying procedures is prohibited in such cases. The Department of Defending the Constitution has somewhat more authority. However, it may engage in surveillace only upon receiving permission from the general prosecutor's office which is granted only after convincing evidence of its necessity has been presented. Often such evidence is impossible to provide, as gathering such data is extremely difficult. This explains why, in spite of the enormous amount of material provided to the German authorities by the Americans and Israelis on German firms who were preparing to take illegal arms shipments to Iraq, the West German legal authorities were unable to curtail such activities.

Of course, this is all the case merely and legal theory and it is quite likely that in practice, German security services are not so pedantic in following the letter of the law.

Not long ago, a telefax machine was installed at the Bonn offices of *New Times*. When the technician called to plug the machine into the outlet removed the socket covering, he whistled in surprise:

"Why are there so many wires in there?" he asked.

I told him not to pay any attention to them and he continued with his work.

Nowadays I sent all my articles in by fax. As a rule, they are all received by Moscow without any problems. However, it is sometimes the case that some of them do not get through. It occassionally happens that I press a button and the terminal display reads "Fax sent successfully." You can't fool a fax machine, so there must be someone on the other end of the wire who received my fax.

But I am not worried by the notion that someone may be reading secretely my articles. Most likely, the problem is a mere one of a purely technical nature. But if someone is pouring through my submissions before they are published, go right ahead! Let them see what my surly editor cuts out of my articles.

BONN

The photo files of the Ministry of State Security in Halle. Here six thousand cassette tapes with recordings of telephone conversations between East German citizens were housed

Jurgen Doller, a member of the Democratic Party in the former GDR, found a bug in the hood of his coat planted there by Stasi along with a microphone, batteries, a radio transmitter and two tiny antennas. Signals could be sent up to four kilometres away

Photos from Der Spiegel magazine (FRG)

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

The system that Russia needs

Fyodor Kokoshkin (1817–1918)

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

The 7th congress of the Constitutional Democratic (CD) Party opened in Petrograd on March 26 1917. That was a congress unprecedented in the history of the Party. After the victory of the February Revolution, the Party took on a new dimension – previously a semi-legal organization opposed to tsarist autocracy and unwilling to come to terms with it, the CDP became a government party with four of its members (P. Milyukov, A. Shangarev, A. Manuilov and N. Nekrasov) represented in the ten-man Provisional Government. The agenda of the Congress was drawn up accordingly. The Congress concentrated on ways to adapt the Party's tactics and strategy to the changing political situation. The need for such a change was stressed by Prince P. Dolgorukov, a member of the Party's Central Committee, in his salutatory address to the Congress. The 8th Congress that followed made amendments in the Party programme and gave up the demand – which had remained steadfast since the day of its foundation – for constitutional democratic monarchy. Monarchy has committed suicide, so why should we try and reanimate it? Such was the consensus at the Congress. From then on the CDP proclaimed its ideal to be a democratic parliamentary republic. The case for it was brilliantly presented by Fyodor Kokoshkin, one of the leaders of the Party (a name already familiar to our readers – see *New Times*, Issue No. 42, 1990) in a speech a few excerpts from which follow.

As a matter of fact, the Constitutional Democrats had never been monarchists in the literal meaning of the word. Their attitude towards monarchy was far from straightforward. Tsardom, which had compromised itself, did not have the CD Party's sympathy; rather on the contrary, the Party was in stiff opposition to it. Nevertheless, as the spontaneous revolutionary movement gained momentum, monarchy as a form of government was until what happened in February, 1917, the only "axis of the country" (as L. Mimokov put it) which protected the nation against anarchy and immediate disintegration. For the CDs, in F. Kokoshkin's words, monarchy was not so much an aim in itself as a means to an end, not a matter of principle but a matter of political expediency. The CDs could not fail to see the depressing growth of the deficit of state power, the hostility to etatism characteristic of the Left-wing intellectuals ("apostasy from the state," in P. Struve's words) which pushed the nation to the brink of an abyss. The CD leaders upheld the idea after the overthrow of autocracy trying to convince their opponents from the Left that under the circumstances the campaign to discredit the Provisional Government and the takeover of the executive power in the country by the Soviets "kindled the flames of discord and disarray in the masses at the moment of their greatest excitement"; however, in the atmosphere of universal euphoria, few realized the historic importance of Russia's spontaneous and swift changeover from age-long slavery to freedom.

Among many political parties, the CDP, which had drawn the flower of the Russian intelligentsia and had rich political experience was, undoubtedly, one of the more serious and constructive political forces. The CD Party's leaders were convinced that the strength of any party lay not in popular slogans, but in its statesmanship. The CDP called for an end to inter-party and inter-class strife, for the consolidation of all constructive democratic forces, for the pooling of their efforts. The idea of a law-governed state is a mainstay of the CD Party programme. As distinct from the adherents of radical maximalism with their characteristic legal nihilism, the CD Party's leaders realized that the freedom of the individual, and political freedom in general, demanded respect for the rule of law, because "freedom should be gained by means which, in themselves, teach the masses respect for freedom and law." Such were the ideas which keynote F.Kokoshkin's speech.

The ideas and plans set forth in this statement (which sound surprisingly topical today) have not been destined to materialize, unforutnately. The spontaneous revolutionary movement had already swept over the country. The extreme-Left parties advanced to the forefront; they spurred on the spontaneous protest of the masses, but could never get it under their control.

Eleven years ago we introduced into our programme a plan stating that it was desirable for Russia to have a parliamentary monarchy as her government. When we adopted this plan we could not be qualified as monarchists in the exact sense. Most of us never viewed the monarchy, even a parliamentary one, as the optimum form of government. A constitutional or parliamentary monarchy never implied for us, real monarchists, that supreme principle to which we would adapt our entire political programme. For us at the time a monarchy was not a principle but a political expediency. As for the state system, we have always distinguished between form and substance and content. Form is the juridical apex of the pyramid of government. Substance is the very content of the political system. For us this second issue has always been basic, essential. We place our concept of the state on three basic principles. As for the relationship between the state and the individual we have always championed and will invariably champion the immutability of civic freedom and civic equality which comprise a mainstay of our programme, an emancipatory liberal principle. Another basic principle for us, referring now not to the relationship between the state and the individual, but to the internal structure of the state as ensuring the full dominant expression the volition of the people, is the principle of democracy. This is our second mainstay. Finally, our third principle, which relates to the task of state activity is implementation of the principles of social justice implying broad reforms seeking to gratify the just demands of the working classes. Such are the three principles upon from which we proceeded. Their implementation comprised our objective, with all also the means to this end.

When eleven years ago, we takled the issue of the form of government, we believed that given the political climate at the time, to take several steps towards our ideal, our immediate task was to transform the monarchy we had then and which had only then adopted the principle of representative institutions into a parliamentary monarchy. We were motivated by such considerations when we thus formulated this political concept of ours. We above all proceeded from an evaluation of the historical significance attaching to constitutional parliamentary monarchy. History has demonstrated that a direct leap from absolutism to democracy

rarely passes beneficially that it often evoked anguishing dangerous relapses into one or another form of personified authority. We saw a parliamentary monarchy above all as a transient phase via which the transfer from absolutism to democracy could be most facilely consummated. We further implied that in its fullest implementation a parliamentary monarchy reduces in practice to an insignificant minimal difference between a parliamentary monarchy and a republican government. Britain at any rate is as free as France and in fact far freer than Mexico, Venezuela and other republics in South and Central America. Finally, when advocating at the time a monarchy, we also took into consideration, our paramount motivation, the public attitude to the monarchy, noting the need to respect the popular custom. A monarchy rests not so much on any rational consideration as on ages-old public custom by virtue of which the notion of the state is invariably incarnated in a living symbol. The role the monarchy plays is to serve as that living symbol of the state in the public eye. Though then, eleven years ago, the monarchic principle in Russia was deeply shaken it had not yet been completely uprooted. The public had still not lost the need to associate their notion of the state with the personal symbol. We by imposing upon this need did not seek to dictate our own ideals to the public. We were right when we took that decision then. Had we not done so, subsequent development could have been less conducive than now. Had we and in our wake the associated broad public, rushed things eleven years ago, perhaps today democracy would have not dropped into the country's hands so ripe a fruit as now. However, when we believed it then politically expedient to take that stance, today eleven years later, conditions have fundamentally changed. These eleven years have not been lost for Russa and her people. Even given the rule of imperfect and distorted representative institutions, they nevertheless represented a grand school for the country and her people. Over these eleven years Russia's political evolution has been much speedier than in other states in analogous circumstances.

Within the period between the establishment in Russia of representative institutions and now a two-fold process of historical development has taken place. On the one hand, the public's state self-awareness has steadily and speedily developed. Those existing imperfect representative institutions not only held out opportunities for the public's political maturity, but, more so precisely by virtue of their imperfection and contradiction, stimulated public aspirations and public ideals, to boost the said process still more so. Over these eleven years the public's political thought grew and strengthened and the need for the personal symbol diminished. When at last in the newly accomplished grand upheaval the Russian nation arose in full stature before the world, many unexpectedly realized that it had gone beyond that phase of development, when the notion of the state is unthinkable without the personal symbol. Another parallel process led to the same goal. The monarchy was put to the test. It had two venues before it. Had it recognized popular rights and honoured the pledges given, perhaps its lot would have been the same as is to be observed in many West European states, with compromise proving as viable with us as there. However, the monarchy chose the other venue. Over the eleven years it constantly rode roughshod over the rights of the people, destroying within their mentality the link existing between the concept of the monarchy and the concept of the state: it undercut its own mainstays and accomplished its demise with its own hands.

Now at stake was not the continuation of the existing monarchy but its restoration. However no party associated in any degree with democratic principles can set itself the objective of restoration. Whereas before sincerely convinced republicans could have been deterred in changing the form of government by the consideration that it would be necessary to spill blood to accomplish their ideal, now the self-same considerations cry out against the monarchy. There is no need to artificially create a republic. It already exists in practice. Of course, in Russia the form of government has yet to be juridically decided. That is for the future Constituent Assembly to say: however, the order that actually exists is not monarchic but republican, a factor that will necessarily influence the Constituent Assembly's future decision. We must recognize and do recognize to the Constituent Assembly the full plentitude of power it exercises here as well and we must say that we bow to the will of the people, whatever it amounts to. However, we still have the right and obligation to convince the people and when conducting our election campaign to the Constituent Assembly we shall need to tell the people what we think about this form of government. We must muster every effort to convince that part of the population still wavering in this respect that it is necessary adopt the republican form of government once and for all.

> If the executive power is not balanced with the parliament's authority it may slither towards a dictatorship

A republic is of significance for us not only from the angle of our future. As we see it, a republic is necessarily the most perfect form of government as it is the form wherein our democratic principle of the dominating expression of the volition of the people is most fully and purely implemented. However, apart from these considerations of principle the vitalmost interests of the current political climate likewise press for a republic. We must not blind ourselves to the menaces facing the state, to the dangers imperilling Russia's newborn freedom. We have freed ourselves from the Romanovs, but we are threatened by the Honenzellorns, who seek to grab the free Russia. What we need most today is unity and a republican mode of government, its incorporation in the programme of all political parties is best to unite Russia. Like the French in the 1870s, we may say that while a monarchy divides us a republic united us. We must speak out for a republican mode of government, not only for the sake of the principle, but also for the sake of the unification of the entire nation in order to act in accord and unity with all groups of the population, especially its most active strata.

As was said before as regards the issue of monarchy and republic, we must not restrict ourselves to the abstract form alone. We cannot rest content with having incorporated in our programme the "democratic republic" term. As I recall, during the election campaign to the First State Duma, when the form of government was mooted, I encountered many opponents, who called for an immediate democratic republic. However when asked how they visualised this republic as American or French, they declined to reply as they had no specific idea. We must not adopt that stance, for though of course it is not for us to currently detail plans for a future republican structure, there are certain basic differences between the main types of republics and, as far as this is concerned, we must adopt a definite stand and introduce certain definite features to our "democratic republic" formula. What should these specific features be? I think they are to be determined by the common

outlook and also by our fundamental political principles, which I have mentioned. After all, our political principle is, firstly, protection of civic liberty or equality, protection of the individual from encroachment by the state authority and the inordinate concentration of such authority in one specific body. Our progamme is indeed to have the will of the people dominate this platform of ours, obligates us to see to it that the will of the people not be distorted in a future republic, not be usurped. The "republic" label now and again hides a state order which has nothing at all in common with a law-governed state. One may adduce history to indicate a range of tyrannies and dictatorships camouflaging themselves as republics. Our republic must be based on law, a constitutional republic, not an absolutist one, as such absolutist republics do exist. This constitutionality represents the bulwark and shield against the two distortions of the principles of democracy, which so often recur in history and against which we must most vehemently and vigorously guard ourselves. These two possible distortions of the principles of democracy are as follows. Firstly, there are cases when all of state authority is wholly concentrated in one representative assembly and no executive authority exists as a separate body. In this case the representative assembly not only legislates, but also governs via its committees or commissioners whom it may arbitrarily appoint and change at discretion. This type of government existed in France in the times of the Convent and led to harsh despotism and the trammelling of all the rights of the individual. There is also the other opposite extreme for a republican form of government, when the executive authority is overly independent of legislative authority and is invested with inordinately broad powers. An executive authority of that nature stands on an incline along which it may slither towards a dictatorship. To ensure the real domination of democratic principles, a republic must manifest a division of authority. Legislative power should be wholly attributed to the representative assembly. As for executive power in a republic we know two basic types. Actually there are three, but I discard the third as being totally inapplicable generally to a large state, especially Russia. I put aside the Swiss type where executive authority is collegiate, where at the head of govenment is not one person but a college elected for a definite term by popular representation. This collegiate authority is reminiscent of executive bodies in local government. For government in a large country having broad tasks such a form of executive authority is an insuperable inconvenience, as firstly it fails to ensure the government's political solidarity. In other republics the executive authority is headed by one person; moreover this may be one of the two types of the executive, American and French. The American type is to have the president of the republic at the head of the executive elected for a definite term by the entire nation; the said president governs not along parliamentary line. The president of the North American republic has no ministers politically accountable to popular representation; his ministers are personal assistants whom he chooses at discretion, regardless of the wishes of popular representation.

The president of the North American republic may govern – and there have been such cases in the history of the North American states – totally at variance to the desires of a popular representation, should he believe that essential. Here there is no ensured accord between legislative and executive authority. The other type of executive authority in a republic is the French one where the president governs through ministries accountable to popular representation. This is a parliamentary republic where the ministries must enjoy the confidence of popular representation and are changed as soon as such confidence is lost. In such conditions the president does not possess such great tangible significance as in the American type of republic. Accordingly, he is elected not by a popular vote, but by the popular representation for a definite term during which he of course is not changed. Now if we take the issue as to which of the two types of executive authority is preferable for Russia, I would unhesitatingly favour the French type. The Central Committee of our Party has expressed the same view. We believe a parliamentary order most perfect, given the present level of the development of mankind, as a means of concerting actions between executive and legislative authority. Executive authority must be separated from legislative authority: it cannot rest in the hands of the Legislative Assembly. On the other hand, it must concert activities with legislative authority, the best means to which end is presented by parliamentarianism, government through ministries accountable to popular representation.

> Democracy should be on guard preventing a fraud and the transformation of the republic into an empire

Linked is the issue of how to elect the president. A national vote but poorly suits parliamentarianism in that it invests the representative of executive authority with too much practical power. One believes a nationwide vote would, in effect, place the president above popular representation; there you have several hundred deputies each representing a relatively small portion of the nation but here you have one nationally elected person invested with immense authority. Such factual authority is harmless in countries where, as in North America, the democratic principle is long rooted, not decades but centuries old. The case is totally different for countries that have only newly adopted a republican road. In this respect nationwide election which places the president on so high a footing, investing him with immense real possibilities for exerting influence may imperil freedom. It may make of the presidency, as has been the case in some countries, desirable object for sundry ambitious persons, who might acquire extensive popularity by means of sundry demagogic promises, which they subsequently break and for whom such nationwide election serves as a bridgehead for a coup d'etat, as occurred in France when Louis Napoleon exploited this to transform the republic into an empire. In our programme we must support the principle shielding republican government from this danger; hence for our part it would be right and correct to have parliamentarianism linked to the president's election by popular representation.

Hence, proceeding from all that I have said, the provisions we should incorporate in our programme as far as the form of government is concerned would state: Russia should be a democratic parliamentary republic: legislative authority should belong to popular representation: the executive authority should be headed by the president of the republic who is elected for a definite term by popular representation and who governs through ministries accountable to popular representation. ■

In 1978 geologists happened upon the Lykov's hut lost in taiga

Hermits

Forty years of self-isolation in the thick of the Siberian taiga

The history of the book, so unreal at a first glance, and so tragical, began thirteen years ago. In the heart of the Siberian taiga, with the nearest population centre 250 kilometres off, geologists happened upon a hut inhabited by a family of five. For over forty years, Karp Osipovich Lykov and his four children had lived in complete isolation from the outside world. They wore clothes of homespun sacking, and birch-bark shoes. The younger generation of the Lykovs had no idea of what bread and salt were; the family lived off their kitchen garden and the taiga.

The Lykovs had settled in the taiga back in the thirties. The reason for them having "got away from it all" was their belonging to the Old Believers' sect which had been persecuted by the official Church since before Peter the Great's times. After the Revolution, persecutions intensified, and the Lykovs had decided to flee "the world" which, in their words, is "full of temptations, sinful, and Godless".

Their first reaction to human intruders was fright: they took the invasion of their privacy as a visitation of God for their sins. The Lykovs' most common answer to the newcomers' questions was: "This is against our rules". It was against their rules to live with people, to wash, to use matches and soap, to eat biscuits, butter and chocolate, to drink tea. They considered it sinful "to eat the flesh of the beasts which got paws" (bears, for instance), but that of hoofed animals is all right. They knew nothing about the development in the outside world – about mankind having gone through World War II, for instance. As time went by, however, the Lykovs gradually got used to their uninvited guests and even came to enjoy their company. The Lykovs accepted only such gifts which were less sinful, from their point of view – such as potatoes, which they had never tasted before.

"Their dwelling is primitive in the extreme and, between prayers and readings from the Gospel, they fight tooth-and-nail to survive in the wilderness". How have these people managed to stay alive, entirely on their own, without any outside help, in the thick of the taiga where are temperatures drop as low as –35 Centigrade in winter, and where no trace of modern civilization can be found? How have they managed to retain their ability to read, to keep track of the time, to enjoy life and each other's company? For the sake of what have they doomed themselves to loneliness and secluded themselves from the world?

In his book *Lost in the Taiga* the well-know Soviet journalist and writer Vasily Peskov tries to provide answers to these questions which are far from easy. He has visited the Lykovs' on more than one occasion, helped them as best he could, observed their life and their behaviour. Peskov's books *The End of the World* (about Kamchatka), *A Bird's Eye View* (about his helicopter trip across the country), *Dewdrops*, his numerous feature stories and on-the-spot reports in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper to which he has been a regular contributor for years) have long brought him national renown, but his stories about the Lykovs have made a real sensation.

At the time when geologists discovered that unique family, it consisted of five members: the father and his four children. Akulina, his wife, who had volunteered to share the "ordeal for faith" with him, died long ago – in the lean year of 1961 when severe frost ruined all their crops. Upon reaching the Lykovs for the first time, the author of the would be book learned a sad news: three of the children were no more; two brothers and, somewhat later, the elder sister died suddenly – of grief. They died soon after their privacy had been violated – that probably provied too much for the hermits after years of seclusion... Peskov found only the father and his junior daughter Agafya in the hut. Agafya "is not only clever, she has a sense of humour and irony, and often cracks jokes at her own expense," Vasily Peskov writes. It was probably thanks to these character traits that Agafya ventured on a trip to the mainland (quite a feat for her). On her way to the place in Central Russia where her relatives lived, she set eyes, for the first time in her life, on such things as a cow, a horse, a car, a plane. What came as the biggest surprise of all to her, however, were the train ("a house on wheels"; incidently, the wheel also came as a discover to her) and the mysterious contraption in it called "W.C." After the trip, Agafya returned to her father – her relatives attempts to talk her into staying with them proved futile.

Then word about perestroika reached the Lykovs. "They are up to something big out there is the world. Ain't we gonna get hurt?" Karp Osipovich kept asking. Unfortunately, he never learned the answer to his question: he died soon at the age of 87, on the very day, February 16, that his wife had passed away 27 years ago... Left all by herself, Agafya remained true to her faith and stayed on in the taiga, well away from the sinful world. Now 47, Agafya still lives there, all alone, with only chance helicopters with geologists on board landing near her hut from time to time...

It was not so easy, in 1982, to publish on the pages of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* the story about the dramatic fate of the Lykovs, the relics of premeval times who somehow got along with "developed socialism". Neither was it easy, in a society of militant atheism, to say that "their faith helped them to hold out, to bear what has been predestinated".

Vasily Peskov and his paper managed to do that. And now the stories about the Lykovs have been brought together into a book which is not only about the fate of this family, but also about the division of the Russian Church three centuries ago, about Patriarch Nikon, the Church reformer, and Archpriest Avvakum, his opponent, whose ideas the Lykovs had been devoted to.

Tatiana Chernova

Another one of our former colleagues has become an "important person." Forty-five-year-old **Boris Asoyan,** who in the 1970s was the African correspondent for *New Times* and later for many years contributed to our magazine, has been appointed Ambassador to Botswana.

Boris Asoyan worked in Africa in the years of Moscow's passionate love for "socialist-oriented" countries and "progressively-minded" leaders like Uganada dictator Idi Amin. It is only recently that our correspondent managed to express his ideas about those people and the Soviet policy of that period in his articles and books. But subscribers to our magazine must remember his excellent reports, articles and essays not only on the politics but also the culture and traditions of African nations. His prestige as a serious and originally-minded expert on Africa and a good journalist brought him to the Institute of African Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, then to the Communist Party Central Committee, and finally to the Foreign Ministry.

As a rule, journalists do not like embassy workers, and complain that diplomats prevent them from writing the truth. Let's hope that Ambassador Asoyan will remember his journalistic experience.

Heads of American information agencies also sometimes turn from journalism to diplomatic work. Sixty-three-year-old **Bruce Gelb,** the director of the United States Information Agency (USIA) plans to leave his post soon. *The Washington Post* reports that he has accepted an offer to head the American Embassy in Belgium.

One of the main reasons for Gelb's voluntary resignation is his differences with the leader of the

Voice of America radio station. Although officially it is subordinate to the USIA, the radio station is to a certain degree independent in assessing events. Bruce Gelb has repeatedly tried to limit this freedom. His last attempt was given scandalous publicity. The USIA head is said to have tried to establish, in fact, absolute administrative, financial and "creative" control over the Voice of America. In response to this step, the radio station's staff addressed a petition to the US Congress, in which they asked to be protected against the USIA inadmissible interference. Our radio station, they said, should be headed by journalists, rather than an ill-matched company of people, who imagine themselves to be propagandists.

However, the extremely categorical and insolent tone of the Voice of America is criticized abroad as well. The latest protest arrived from the Afghan Foreign Ministry, which accused the radio station of meddling in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. The Afghan Foreign Ministry believes that American journalists dare to try to tell the Afghan government how to behave.

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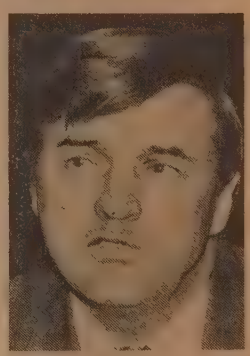

The number of bureaucrats in Ulyanovsk is no higher than the average number around the country. But it is there that the first Soviet Anti-Bureaucratic Centre was formed. Its co-chairman, 53-year-old **Grigory Starunov,** believes that no restructuring of the Party machinery has taken place in the provinces. According to Starunov, "the Party and government bureaucrats remain above the law, persecute dissidents, prevent the spreading of truthful information and deprive the society of freedom." But unlike those of the stagnation period, the present-day

Prisoners of conscience

The two latest monthly information bulletins distributed around the world by the Amnesty International human rights organization name two people who are in need of public defence. They are 37-year-old assistant teacher from Morocco **Habib Ben Malek** and 40-year-old lawyer and human rights worker **Alirio de Jesus Pedraza Becerra.**

Habib Ben Malek is one of the 170 members of a coalition of Marxist groups known as Frontistes who were arrested on April 21, 1976. They were accused of belonging to an illegal association and plotting against the internal security of the country. The prosecution claimed that in advocating the formation of a people's republic in Morocco, the defendents intended to bring about the violent overthrow of the monarchy. Although the evidence produced in court consisted of radical literature and duplicating equipment, 44 members of the organization received life sentences and 129 were sentenced to between 5 and 30 years in prison. All defendants received additional sentences of two years' imprisonment as a result of their protests against the conduct of the trial.

According to Amnesty International, the trial procedures fell short of international standards of a fair trial.

Dr. Pedraza was seized on July 4, 1990, by Colombian police agents and members of the security forces. Dr. Pedraza was a long-standing active member of the Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee, and was investigating a number of cases of human rights violations attributed to the Colombian armed forces. He was representing families of those killed when troops opened fire on hundreds of peasants during a protest march in May 1988. He was also working on behalf of trade unionists detained in March 1990 and accused of belonging to a guerrilla organization. Charges were later dropped and the Procurator General's office has opened disciplinary proceedings against members of the armed forces who took part in the detention. An investigation has been initiated against those guilty of the abduction of Dr. Pedraza. But despite all efforts by Dr. Pedraza's family and collegues to locate him, the armed forces and police authorities continue to deny his detention and he remains "missing."

Amnesty International says in its report for 1990 that it started an independent investigation of 2,886 similar cases of people arrested for political or religious beliefs, or ethnic origin in 87 countries.

bureaucrats are more refined and sly.

Grigory Starunov graduated from a politechnical institute in the city of Perm. He is an electrical engineer and works with automatic management systems. He was recently elected deputy to the Ulyanovsk city council. He is not affiliated with any party. He is an activist of the Zavolzhsk Voters' Association, which last year when rationing cards were introduced in the city suggested granting the No.1 rationing card to V. Lenin, who was born in this city.

The regional Communist Party committee considers Starunov an extremist. The Anti-Bureaucratic Centre regards him as a radical, while he describes his political views as left of centre. As a co-chairman of the Centre, he sees his task as advocating political culture, revealing double standards and spreading the truth about those guilty of the crisis in the country. He links his hopes for positive changes in the country to the forming of a sovereign personality in people; since he believes that only free people can provide for themselves and the entire nation.

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Forty-nine-year-old Foreign Minister of the Afghan opposition government **Burhanuddin Rabbani** has opened a diplomatic mission of the mujahedin in Sudan. Sudan is the second country after Saudi Arabia to have established official ties with the Afghan opposition and the first to have opened an embassy.

Rabbani, a Tajik from the Yaftali tribe, was born in Feyzabad into a family of a mullah. He finished the Abu-Hanifa lyceum in Kabul and then graduated from the theological department of Kabul University. Then he

went to Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Later on he returned to Kabul University, this time as a teacher, where he joined the leadership of the organization Muslem Youth. In 1973 he was elected head of the organization Moslem Brotherhood, but three years later, in connection with the persecution of members of this organization, he emigrated to Pakistan, where he founded the Islamic Society of Afghanistan, which still remains very influential among numerous parties and trends of the mujahedin.

Rabbani headed a delegation of the mujahedin at the talks with the Soviet Union in Al-Taif in 1988. The Soviet delegation was led by Yuli Vorontsov.

* * *

World famous master of the Korean Tae Kwon Do school of martial arts, 59-year-old **Jhoon Rhee**

plans to open a number of sports schools and clubs in this country and educate Soviet people. For many years now he's been conducting a seminar all over the world (and now in Moscow as well) on pedagogics, philosophy and morals. Jhoon Rhee believes that martial arts are philosophy in action. The road to self-improvement lies through teaching people self-discipline, self-respect and confidence in oneself. It takes Jhoon Rhee many years of training to teach his pupils these qualities.

I want to live till I am 136, the master says, so as to show people how to improve their human nature with the help of common sense.

Jhoon Rhee is considered the father of Tae Kwon Do in the US. In 1976 he was recognized as the best martial arts master of this century. He coached the famous Bruce Lee, Muhammad Ali, George Allen, Jack Valenti and one hundred- odd American congressmen. In 1956 he left South Korea for the United States with only 46 dollars in his pocket. Now he's been appointed by the US President as a member of the National Council on Vocational Education.

In this country, Grand Master Jhoon Rhee Fund was founded and is sponsored by the Victoria International Non-Governmental Salutary Fund.

According to unofficial sources, in Moscow the Grand Master met with Alexei Shturmin, charged during the stagnation years for "preparing units of militants" and anti-Soviet activity. However, Jhoon Rhee, who is not an expert on Soviet law, saw in Shturmin only a high-class professional athlete and one of the founders of a school of Oriental martial arts in the Soviet Union.

K. Shukhnov

* * *

The artist and maidens of noble birth

"At the end of the year, the trustee Her Highness the Great Duchess Elizaveta Fyodorovna, would always arrive. Everybody was getting ready for her visit. It was already known who was an 'excellent student' and that girl could order any book she wanted to have. After the examinations the schoolmarm would read out the list of those who would get awards. These students were then taught how to approach Her Highness during the awards ceremony, when and how to curtsey and kiss her hand. The students stayed and studied at the Alexandro-Mariinski Institute from August 15 through the end of May."

Those are quotations from documents and memoirs on the institute for girls of noble birth in Moscow, which existed up until the 1917 October Revolution. The documents and memoirs were gathered by **Mikhail Smorchevsky,** an avant-garde artist, described by *New Times* (No.4/90) as the founder of a cultural society of Poles living in the Soviet capital. Smorchevsky, who is proud of the fact that he can trace his aristocratic ancestors back to the year 1416, wants to restore the famous institute for the daughters of those who died defending their country, this time for the daughters of Soviet officers. The last manager of the Alexandro-Mariinski Institute belonged to Mikhail's family. His name was Leopold Smorchevsky.

According to data of the USSR Defence Ministry, there are approximately 1200 girls in this country whose fathers died in Afghanistan. Mikhail wants to help them first and foremost. In this he is also following the tradition of Russian aristocrasy and artistic intelligentsia. The Institute existed largely on donations of high society, and the Widows' House founded in Russia following the Russian-Japanese war, was built with the money of architect Kazakov.

At present Smorchevsky is studying how they taught at the Institute and how they managed to hand down from one generation to another that wonderful spirit of Russian culture, which the present generation has practically completely lost.

The authorities have approved the project and you are welcome to send your donations to the following bank account: Transexpobank No.700138, correspondence account 161829, MFO 201791 MGU Gosbank USSR. One of the first donations is likely to be the money Smorchevsky will receive for the pictures he sold in the United States — some 100 thousand dollars.

A night-time chat in a hospital

In lieu of an account of my visit to Zavolzhsk

I tossed and turned. In the miasmic heaviness of the railway coach my fellow travellers gently snore and groan. I am heading for Zavolzhsk to visit my sister in the hospital. The Moscow-Kineshma slow train creaks and whines as it takes me to my destination stopping for some reason at nearly every post. It is pitch dark outside and one thinks that there is naught else in the whole wide world except this thunderous achievement of civilization. Only rare flashes of light cut through the closeness inside, imparting form to the fanciful outline of the blankets drooping from the upper berth.

I toss and turn. I start counting sheep, but I still can't fall asleep. In general I feel rotten. The bed linen is damp and it is filthy and hot... No tea was offered – a pity as the tea drinking rite imparts special charm to a train journey. Indeed, the tinkling of glasses in their holders, the twin lumps of sugar, the tea, even if weak, all possess the unusual power of integrating total strangers around the tiny battered shelf, of smoothing over estrangement, of loosening tongues and evoking candor. But now there was nothing with which to heat the water.

"Show your tickets! Loos will be locked in half an hour from now! Turn in your bed linen!" The commands the train conductress shouts roll like sudden thunder. I had nevertheless dozed off. Why was she arousing us so early? There was still more than an hour to go.

At last we arrive. "Kineshma" reads the legend above the attractive, though old and dirty railway station building. Nothing seems to have changed since I was here last. All continue to await the departure of the battered inter-urban buses. Private car owners fuss around their machines with their home-made checker-board designs and green lights. The new railway station building is still under construction. Concrete, metal, glass.

Still there are changes. The huge two-storey-high portrait depicting a full-length Lenin in traditional cap, and coat with red buttonhole bow has been removed. Before it one thought he would at any moment stride across the cracked asphalt of the railway station square. A pity that the portrait has been removed, as the colourful canvas had betrayed the painter's adherence to the traditions of global neo-impressionism.

"Look, Muscovites! And they say there's nothing to eat there in Moscow. But there she is with full bags!" That refers to me.

After freezing for a while in futile anticipation of a bus I resolve to trot off to Zavolzhsk on foot. Wending my way down humpbacked, zigzagging Kineshma lanes, I find myself on the banks of the Volga and resolutely set foot on the ice of this Mother of Russian rivers separating the two towns. The biting wind and the 18 degrees Centigrade frost continue to cut through to the very marrow.

* * *

Night. The hospital smoking room.

"What a life! Not a single butt. It's never been like this before!"

Amazed, I discover a man in striped hospital pyjamas quatting on his haunches in the corner. He is intently examining the contents of the dustbin.

"Gee, I've found a couple," he happily exclaims. Somewhat belatedly I recollect that I have a whole package of cigarettes in my pocket.

"Here, have a couple. I've got more."

"Thanks, I won't refuse your kind offer."

"Won't the doctors be sore at you for not being in bed?"

"Oh, no. I'm soon to be released."

"What's wrong with you?"

"My tummy. But I've told them to let me go. No earthly good lying around here. Who's going to feed the cattle?"

"Got a lot?"

"Well, a cow, pigs, chicken and sheep, everything. No time to be loafing here. I had fifteen years in jail. All because of drink. The first time that was, and then I went again. But now, as soon as it was allowed, I built myself a house and started my own farm. I've got my own meat, my own spuds and my own milk, and some money too. I'm a kulak, you see, my own master. Ever seen a kulak?"

He falls silent. Sucking on his cigarette, he shuffles across the floor.

"Yes, I'm a kulak. Dad was a kulak too. We were all deported. Only mother returned with us, little ones. When grown up we all went our different ways. Still, I'm the richest. I'd take some more land and buy myself a tractor, but they won't allow it."

"Who won't?"

"The bosses. They grab for themselves the better land and buy machinery for a song. As for us, they tell us where to get off..."

"And you can't get anything?"

"How are you going to do it? Whom are you to complain to? It's they who have the say. Nobody can tell them what's what. But I'd like to have some more land."

"Aren't you afraid they'll again start a drive against the kulaks?"

"I certainly am. But if that happens, I'll set fire to the whole kit and caboodle. I'll willingly accept prison fare. I won't surrender anything to this state."

"Take yourself off to bed. It's already past two in the morning," the nanny interrupts. Slowly waddling from foot to foot, but with a full sense of dignity he moves towards the door. Soon his footsteps fade away in the depths of the hospital corridor.

"Come to see your Muscovite, is that it? She's already better. In a fortnight or less, she'll be going home," the nanny tells me.

"You've certainly got a good hospital here, and nice folks too."

"Yes, and our doctors are as good as gold."

"How goes it with medicine?"

"Nothing. Not even for a headache."

"Are many in a bad way?"

"Well, besides your sister, there is a lady here, but she's a bit better now too. When they first brought her in it was something terrible. She got a cable to go to the Ukraine to bury her father. So she was in a bus, when suddenly it stopped half-way and in come some blokes who say: 'Locals out, we're going to beat up non-locals.'" She shows them her passport, that she's Ukrainian born and was coming for a funeral. But they tell her she's a traitor. So she didn't get to bury her father. They beat her up so badly that her face was a bloody mess. She had concussion and a broken back. Her hubby, a local, collected her and brought her back here."

"And the police?"

"What can they do? She didn't even go to them. After all, whom do the police protect? There, they've brought the army in. But whom does the army protect and from whom?"

For a while she falls to scrubbing the floor. Then she comes up to sit next to me.

"We've got another badly ill person here. He's not long for this earth."

"What's the matter with him?"

"Seen what sort of water comes out of the tap?"

"No."

"Now it's pink, now blue, now green."

"Well, you've got a chemical plant here, haven't you?"

"That's just it. Many die of cancer. Kidneys, bladder..."

"Don't the locals know?"

"Well, there are some who do, and some who just guess. Last summer they poured something into the Volga and then a boat scattered the fish that floated up."

"Surely something should be done about that."

"Of course, something should. But who's to be bothered? Seen the salt in the shop?"

"Yes."

"It's from Byelorussia. Radioactive, they say. They think we're ignoramuses."

"Hasn't anybody tested it?"

"Who's going to take the trouble?"

I recall the kulak, who stamped off to bed and the anger with which he spoke about "the state."

"Do people take land?"

"They want to. But I don't know whether anything will come of it. The bosses grab it all."

"Wouldn't you like to take some?"

"I sure would. Mother told me there used to be a dairy near here and a piggery too. They used to export butter, but when the drive against the kulaks started, the master burned everything down. Nothing was saved. Mother said the pigs squealed terribly."

"Anyone rebuilt it?"

"Ha-ha! Ever since we've had no butter in the shops. Is it true that they've jacked up the prices in Moscow?"

"Well, officially no, but it's all a muddle."

"It's the same here. One big muddle. There's nothing for sale at state prices. Our coupons are just bits of paper. You never know whether they're going to give you anything for them, or not. We come one day, the next, but there's no point. Of course, there's something at the co-op, but the prices are five to ten times more, and they're all different everywhere. Who on earth is jacking up the prices? The state? Or somebody else? You have it harder in town. After all, we can get by. Just look, I've got everything: milk, meat, eggs, vegetables. Hunger will pass us by. Well, we didn't store up enough for this winter, but we'll have enough for the next. True, there might not be enough bread."

"But they had a bumper crop this year."

"They let it all go down in drink. And they ploughed over the winter grain. We barely managed to get our own crop in. It's pretty bad as far as spuds go. The Colorado beetle, you know. And now frosts have struck. It might all freeze, there's too little snow, and the ground is frozen through. But we've got our own orchard, our own cherries, apples, red currants, and we get by. It's hard work, true. But we're thinking of raising geese and rabbits. But look, day's already breaking. So I'll be going. I'll soon be off duty. The doctor says you don't have to sit out the night here."

* * *

They let me go. In search of refuge, I roam about the town. Now to the right of me, now to the left I see queues of people stamping their feet in the cold. Liquor is being vended at the toy shop. The husky cop pushes back overly energetic would-be buyers. At the chemist's there's a line for mustard plasters. At the bookshop another for Lermontov's poetry. And at the food shop a third line, in hope of getting something. The local club features a Hollywood movie, and a rock concert by a touring group from Moscow. In short, life continues.

That doubtful luck of getting a bed in an eight-bed room in the Zavolzhsk hotel is out of reach. They won't take me.

The next few days are spent mainly on the go. Three kilometres on foot to the bus stop, some forty minutes on one bus and another ten on another. Two hours at the hospital and back. Perhaps for that reason the clickety-clack of the Kineshma-Moscow express seems a sweet lullaby to me.

I get tea, dry bed linen, and a two-berth compartment.

My companion, a lad of some twenty summers from Ivanovo, who is dressed like a tsarist officer, tells me that he has been invited to the States for a visit and that he doesn't plan to come back.

Yaroslava Rakhmanova

Photo by Eduard Gladkov from the book "Another Russia"

Don't take it to heart

Competent sources reveal that there have been of late totally unconfirmed rumours that the "perestroika conceived in 1985" has supposedly "not come off" as Ivan Polozkov puts it.

Accordingly, it behooves me to do my duty as citizen and declare the following.

Only persons with not quite seemly aims in mind will deny the obvious, that the basic deed during the chapter of perestroika's triumphant inception was the enactment of the edict concerned with the drive against drunkenness and alcoholism. This has wholly and fully come off as vineyards have been rooted out, imported Czech beer production lines have completely rusted, while the "pol-litra" (half-litre) has taken root as the firmest freely convertible currency. Soviet finances no longer sing, they sob out Canio's aria: "Ridi, Pagliaccio..." Popular consumption of liquor has been successfully curtailed by making such drink unavailable in shops, lengthening queues to the point of delirium and other tested methods. In response to such concern, the broad working masses have promoted a truly Stakhanov-type drive in the home distilling of hooch, indeed have contributed a thousand and one rational suggestions whereby to perfect the needed technology. Categories in ages from 16 years and above are busy with such socially beneficial middleman services as the re-selling of liquor at two to four times the shop price. They are thereby wedding the advantages of socialism, notably no unemployment among the younger generation, with the advantages of capitalism, knack and knowhow of free entrepreneurial activity, and have thus pointed a realistic road to a planned market economy.

> "Scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have summarized data gathered in a 24-year-long survey of more than 5,000 people. They say a daily intake of 50 grammes of pure alcohol guards against maladies of the cardio-vascular system. Translated into accessible drink, this amounts to one litre of beer, half a litre of table wine, 300 grammes of fortified wine, or 125 grammes of vodka or whisky.
>
> **(From the newspaper *Kommersant* No.6 for 1991)**

Meanwhile, in the light of the latest scientific data, it must be admitted that in the process of the population's de-alcoholization public health was somewhat impaired by the shortage of the minimally required daily dose of liquor essential for the cardio-vascular system. It must also be admitted that the USSR Health Ministry failed to issue prompt warning as to such side effects of the non-consumption of alcohol.

In connection with all this, I likewise deem it necessary to propose:

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

– With a view to averting the population's extinction due to the absence of the required minimal daily dose of alcohol, count the afore-mentioned edict concerned with the drive against drunkenness and alcoholism as invalid. By the year 2000 to guarantee every resident of the USSR a rationed daily quota of cardio-vascular drops in the form of alcohol, beer, table or fortified wine and vodka. To institute a Survival Foundation in the conditions of temperance and deduct the appropriate percentage from the incomes of factories, offices and individuals. To introduce emergency use of the said Foundation's resources for persons afflicted by acute cardio-alcoholic insufficiency. To proclaim the doubling of prices of liquor, inflation; the trebling of such price, stabilization, and the raising of such prices four times and more, a radical economic reform. To discontinue shop vending of vodka, brandy, champagne and wines by organizing their sale directly at state distilleries provided would-be buyers present bottles, labels, corks or caps, and sealing wax together with medical certificates of cardio-vascular insufficiency and the appropriate quantity of empty vials from liquid heart stimulants and other medicines in short supply.

– To launch the faster production of three-star old brandy from the sawdust remaining from furniture manufactured during the stagnation period and laid up for three days; five-star brandy from the sawdust remaining from furniture manufactured during the times of voluntarism and laid up for at least five days, and elite brands from the sawdust remaining from furniture manufactured during the chapter of the victory of socialism in one country. Should the Union treaty be signed, to permit Armenia to distill brandy in unlimited quantities, Georgia to produce dry and semi-dry wines, and the Ukraine to distill pepper vodka under a USSR Health Ministry warning stating "Don't take it to heart."

– To perpetuate the memory of the de-alcoholization campaign, boost the movement of the "Young Kuzmichites" and "A Sober Childhood in a Non-Sober Epoch." To erect in the native town of the Hero of the Patriotic War Against Drunkenness, a monument comprised of shattered bottle glass and reinforced concrete, to be known as "Saint Yegor transfixing the green dragon" (the Russian equivalent of "pink elephants" – **Trans.**) and institute in Tomsk a library-cum-museum of temperance. To authorize the USSR State Cinema Committee to produce a highly artistic joint Mosfilm–Hollywood epic entitled *Gone with the Edict* and to endorse film actor Georgy Vitsin as Clark Gable, Yelena Yakovleva, winner of the Nike–90 prize for her role in *Intergirl*, as Vivien Leigh, and our compatriot Savely Kramarov as the Hero of the Patriotic War Against Drunkenness.

Forgive us, Yegor Kuzmich.

Evgeny Rusakov

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